

THE TEACHING OF METAPHOR
IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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THE TEACHING OF METAPHOR
IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

by



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of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

All curriculum materials involving the teaching of language arts at the junior high level in the schools of Newfoundland and Labrador were surveyed. All materials related to metaphor and the instruction of metaphor were studied, and certain conclusions were drawn.

First, there is a distinct lack of organization of materials related to metaphor. Second, no attempt is made in any of the texts to provide a sequential development of instructional materials. Third, since most material is found in anthologies devoted to a number of topics, the consequence is that treatment of the topic is often superficial and repetitive.

These conclusions prompted the author to construct two units of lesson plans which were subsequently taught in two separate grade nine academic classes. The majority of the exercises were based upon ideas found in the research literature. Having assessed these lessons the author developed a final unit in metaphor which could be offered to grade nine students.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Turbayne states that "a good metaphor sometimes enables us to learn not only more about the nature of the thing illustrated but, through it more about the nature of its literal meaning."¹ What strikes one as significant about this definition of metaphor is that it assumes that the individual already knows "about the nature of the thing" but through the awareness of metaphor he will know more. Ricoeur believes "live metaphors are metaphors of invention within which the response to the discordance in the sentence is a new extension of meaning."² Both definitions serve to exemplify the mushrooming effect of a metaphor. Although Turbayne was interested in exposing the dangers of "beguiling"³ metaphor while Ricoeur was interested in the "creativity" of metaphor both were aware of metaphor's potential for increasing knowledge. Any phenomenon capable of increasing our knowledge is certainly worthy of study.

To appreciate the worth of a good metaphor, any student must be aware of its presence and must be able to subject it

¹Colin Turbayne, The Myth of Metaphor (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1970). p. 102.

²Paul Ricoeur, Interpretation Theory Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning (Fort Worth: The Texas Christian Univ. Press, 1976). p. 52.

³Turbayne, p. 103.

to analysis or manipulation. Junior High School students already use a large number of metaphors and are capable of recognizing many others. However, when students are presented with unfamiliar metaphors they tend to have trouble interpreting them. Smith, in his study of children's understanding of written metaphor, chose to work with grade eight students "because at this stage the children are at the formal operational stage of thinking and should be capable of the abstract cognitive processes necessary for understanding metaphor. . . ." ⁴ Even so, he found that after being presented with a number of metaphors children did not demonstrate the use of formal operations in their interpretation of metaphor.

In fact many of the low-scoring responses showed the characteristics of earlier pre-operational and concrete operational stages. . . . When children are presented with new and difficult material they tend to return to earlier stages of cognitive functioning. ⁵

The present study is based upon the assumption that students can direct their experiences to the understanding of unique metaphors if they are taught how to recognize

⁴John William Alexander Smith, Children's Understanding of Written Metaphor. Diss. (Edmonton: Univ. of Alberta, 1973) p. 52.

⁵Smith, p. 178.

different metaphor types through the use of clues presented in the given text. This paper is, then, the report of one attempt to discover if the student's awareness of metaphor can be enhanced through lessons of instruction based on the theory of metaphor.

Survey of Curriculum Materials

The first step in fulfilling the purpose of this study was to survey relevant information pertaining to metaphor and the instruction of metaphor in the textbooks of grade seven, eight and nine students of Newfoundland and Labrador. Many of these texts are anthologies with the usual limitations upon in-depth discussion and specific examples of metaphor. Anthologies as a rule are geared to a wide audience with varied literary abilities. Because of the number of topics that must be covered these texts tend to introduce a subject such as "metaphor" and then place the responsibility for further development and expansion of the topic upon the shoulders of the teacher.

Grade Seven

In the anthology Thrust (a high interest reader designed to develop basic reading activities), the story, and finally discussion and evaluation, there is no direct reference to metaphor. In the section on "Figurative

Language"⁶ we can assume by the kind of questions posed that all students are expected to be familiar with the term.

For example, in Roy Bradbury's All Summer In a Day, a story about children who were born on the planet Venus and who have never seen the sun, Margot, who once lived on earth describes the sun as "a flower that blooms for just one hour."⁷ The question following the story states:

Because the sun is described by means of familiar things, name at least three things with which the sun is compared.

The question continues with:

If you wanted to describe snow to someone who had never seen it before, with what things would you compare it?⁸

The authors then provide the teacher with an opportunity to introduce metaphor as "a comparison of two things." Although this is an anthology and hence limited in the amount of detail with which its author can develop an idea stimulated by a particular story, it does in fact highlight the

⁶Olive Stafford Niles, Elsie Katterjohn, Guidebook to Accompany Thrust (Oakland: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1968), p. 13.

⁷Niles, Thrust.

⁸Niles, Thrust.

dilemma of the teacher. This particular section on figurative language was classified as "optional," leaving the decision for study up to the teacher. For our purposes, this example demonstrates the constraints of anthologies in trying to provide variety at the expense of development of certain topics (in this case, metaphor).

In Patterns of Communication, language as communication is divided into six units, literature being one. Images are discussed as being created by writers through "sensory details."⁹ The authors go on to explain how the writer "creates images through the use of special comparisons called similes and metaphors." Several examples of similes and metaphors are provided with this accompanying statement:

Notice that these comparisons do not make use of either "like" or "as." Metaphors, in fact, are much more powerful comparisons because of this fact. For example it is much more powerful to say that "Lucy is a cyclone" than to say she is "like a cyclone. . . ."¹⁰

To aid in teaching the concept "dissimilar objects share things in common," students are asked to answer the following

⁹Allan Glatthorn and Jane Christensen Patterns of Communication Teacher's Ed. (Toronto, D.C. Heath-Canada Limited, 1976) p. 108.

¹⁰Glatthorn, p. 110.

question: "Which is deeper, an enormous hole or loneliness?"¹¹

Finally, having discussed several passages from famous authors of literature, the editors conclude with the notion that metaphors "are actually powerful images that help us to look at life in new and different ways."¹²

This material, then, represents the most extensive in-depth description of metaphor the grade seven teacher is apt to find in the language and literature texts for grade seven. If teachers choose, they may use the anthology Open Highways. Here, the editor of the skillbook states that "a writer may make his ideas clearer and more interesting by comparing two different things."¹³ When he does this by saying that one thing is another, he is using a metaphor. Students are then asked to pick the metaphors from this poem:

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That can not fly,

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams go
Life is a barren field

¹¹Glatthorn, p. 112.

¹²Glatthorn, p. 112.

Frozen with snow.¹⁴

I have no doubt that students would select the proportional metaphor, but would they see that "hold fast to dreams" is also metaphorical? Here again the teacher is left on his own. Does he accept the proportional metaphor and leave it at that, or does he get into a discussion of old metaphors and the word "hold?"

For teachers wishing to pursue an aspect of literature like metaphor, they may refer to the Ginn Series - for example, Introduction to Literature. Metaphor is introduced in the middle of the poetry section.

In metaphor the comparison is more subtle, it is implied rather than stated directly. You probably use metaphors in your daily speech, but they are so worn with use that you hardly notice them. If you say, for example, that you are "boiling with anger," you are comparing the agitation and nervousness you experience when angry to the rapid boiling of water.¹⁵

The authors then touch upon the idea of underlying meaning in metaphor but they do not expand upon it. Through examples from Shakespeare's play As You Like It and Countee Cullen's

¹⁴Robinson, p. 52.

¹⁵Betty Yvonne Welsh, Introduction To Literature Teacher's Handbook and Key (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1967) p. 478.

poem "Leaves" they try to demonstrate the use of metaphors to "look at life in a new way"¹⁶ and to "extend the theme" of a poem, respectively.

Grade Eight

The grade eight literature text is called Focus, and like the grade seven text makes no direct reference to metaphor. There are no exercises making use of metaphor.

Patterns of Communication in grade eight contains reference to metaphor in the section on figurative speech. It is fortunate that the language texts for grades seven and eight do contain some mention of metaphor to offset the lack of material in the literature texts Thrust and Focus. The authors of Patterns of Communication are concerned with the "force" of metaphor. The force of metaphor lies in its ability "to connect objects in strange ways, to link things which previously had no link."¹⁷ As is true for the grade seven edition, the authors again suggest exercises to stimulate "metaphorical thinking."¹⁸ This time, students are blindfolded and asked to feel objects and compare them to something they are familiar with.

This edition echoes a previously stated theme in

¹⁶Welsh, p. 479.

¹⁷Allan Glatthorn, Jane Christensen, Patterns of Communication (Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company 1975) p.118.

¹⁸Glatthorn, Teacher's Ed. p. 27.

different words. For example: "Metaphors are similar to similes in all respects with one exception, similes make use of either like or as, metaphors do not."¹⁹ There are, however, new ideas concerning metaphors introduced to grade eight students, these directed to the location of the metaphor in the sentence. "The most common place for the metaphor is in the noun phrase after the verb to be or directly in the verb."²⁰ (Example: "Love roots me to this place.") The author also points out that metaphors are sometimes overused and gives as an example "He is a rat."

In the text Open Highways for grade eight there is a reference to a metaphor presented in the poem "Apartment."²¹ Here the "lives" of contemporary man are compared to those of a "bee" - the "beehive" being the "apartment house." For a more classical reference for metaphor and its use in poetry, the editors of The Study of Literature use the poem "To a Waterfowl."

The author sees his life is in some ways like that of a waterfowl. By making this comparison he is using a metaphor, an implied comparison between two things which are basically unlike,

¹⁹Glatthorn, p. 122.

²⁰Glatthorn, p. 123.

²¹Helen Robinson and Charlotte Huck, Open Highways 8, Oakland: Scott, Foresmann and Company, 1968) pp. 213-214.

but which do have some similarities.²²

The student is then asked "How is the bird's flight like the man's life?"²³

Grade Nine

Understanding Literature is also one of the Ginn Series and, like the grade seven edition, tends to be repetitious on the theme of metaphor. For example, the author asks "Why does a poet use metaphor?"²⁴ The answer is simply that in using a good metaphor "the poet does say what he means, and says it more quickly, more accurately and more strikingly than if he tried to avoid metaphor."²⁵

The reference text for grade nine, Teaching Language and Literature, develops metaphor at length. Unfortunately, the book is to be dropped from the list of reference materials for the junior high school language program. The authors describe the metaphorical process thus: "Encountering a new phenomenon and having no precise way to describe it, the speaker seizes upon a word denoting something similar

²²William Eller, Ruth E. Reeves and Edward J. Gordon, The Study of Literature, Ginn & Company 1967, p. 628.

²³Eller, p. 630.

²⁴Elizabeth White, Joan Wofford, and Edward J. Gordon, Understanding Literature (Lexington: Ginn and Company, 1975) p. 158.

²⁵White, p. 158

and uses it figuratively, the context making the sense apparent."²⁶ They conclude that students need to:

recognize extension of meaning through metaphor as a fundamental principle of language development - in all probability, one of the most important means by which language has grown and adapted itself to fit our changing needs.²⁷

Having provided an excellent reason for studying metaphors, the authors then turn their attention to the uses of metaphor.

The conscious use of metaphorical language is to shock us into attending sharply - to force our surrender to the feeling evoked. If it is to increase and intensify the connotative force of the literal, it must be both apt and fresh not strained or trite. The student should be helped to see that since metaphorical language is embedded in the pattern of language development and since its purpose is to heighten meaning and feeling, it will be found on all levels from the vernacular to the literary.²⁸

²⁶Walter Loban, Margaret Ryan and James R. Squire, Teaching Language and Literature (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc. 1961) p. 23.

²⁷Loban, p. 34.

²⁸Loban, p. 35.

Teachers then would do well to keep this last statement in mind when considering whether to introduce metaphor. Another cogent comment reads:

The value in teaching most students to discriminate among various figures of speech is highly dubious. Instead, the typical boy or girl must come to see, through many examples, how an apt comparison of two disparate and logically unrelated things flashes meanings from poet to reader.²⁹

One of the functions of the poet is to find metaphors that release feeling and meaning.

In the optional prose anthology Voices, which is geared to the lower 20 per cent of the grade nine class, the author does a good job of developing metaphor as found in a short story. In the story Shago by James Pooler, the author describes the speed of the Indian: "He had feathers for feet."³⁰ In the questions that accompany the short story the author asks "Why is the phrase 'feathers for feet' more effective than light on his feet? Why wouldn't 'cotton for feet' be as effective as 'feathers for feet'?"³¹ Pooler then is working

²⁹Loban, p. 508.

³⁰Jay Cline, Ken Williams and Donlan, Voices in Literature, Language and Composition (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1974) p. 121.

³¹Cline, p. 118.

on the idea of images created through sensory words but in a manner different from those found in Patterns of Communication for grade seven.

Perhaps the best effort at developing an instructional approach to the teaching of metaphor can be found in the teacher's edition of Learning Language. In discussing words and how they get their meanings, the authors state:

The widening of meaning to fit a new context often involves a transfer of certain features of meaning from one word (or phrase) to another - a process resulting in a metaphor.³²

These features of meaning are similar to Max Black's "associated commonplaces."³³ The authors of this text have not made the mistake of stating metaphor as a mere comparison. The authors then suggest two inductive approaches to the introduction of metaphor. First, there is the study of a word, its "cluster of meanings"³⁴ and the transfer of certain of these meanings to another context. (They take the example of "cat" and list its qualities.) Only shared features can be used if a metaphor is to communicate. For

³²P.G. Penner, R.E. McConnell, Learning Language Teacher's Handbook. (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1977) p. 38.

³³Max Black, Models and Metaphors, (New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 1962).

³⁴Penner, p. 39.

example, "the engine purred."³⁵ We transfer to the engine certain features of the culturally accepted meaning of "cat."

Their second suggestion involves the study of groups of metaphors and the drawing of conclusions from them. In the example "you are a snake in the grass," "snake in the grass" carries a cluster of meanings for us. We transfer some of them to person and persons become treacherous, hidden. "It is also true that our own thinking can be blinkered by the metaphors we accept and use. A metaphor can illuminate, because it works by analogy, but it can limit one's thinking to that one image."³⁶ The authors conclude their discussion by stating that metaphor is mentioned only in the handbook for teachers. Apparently they feel that students may not be ready to accept such detail of metaphor. Again the option for the introduction of this section is left to the teacher.

Although there are many other texts in the English curriculum of grades seven, eight and nine, only those containing direct reference to metaphor have been mentioned.

It becomes clear that there is no sequential development of instruction in metaphor. Secondly, metaphor is presented in a large number of anthologies often with the result that treatment of the topic is superficial and repetitive. Finally the option for introducing metaphor is left

³⁵Penner, p. 39.

³⁶Penner, p. 44.

to the teacher while at the same time the number of ideas or programs for teaching metaphor is limited.

It is obvious that many of the comments found in these anthologies can be traced to the theory of metaphor itself. Unfortunately, there is no indication that any writer of a text for the junior high student has considered in any depth the majority of theorists prior to presenting his views on metaphor. Though difficult, the task of reviewing the theory of metaphor is pertinent.

Chapter II

The Theory of Metaphor

Any discussion of the theory of metaphor must consider the diverse base of its origin. It may be that the most reasonable approach is to review historically the various contributions made by theorists, beginning, of course, with Aristotle.

Berggren, in his discussion of Aristotle's definition of metaphor, cites the contradiction found in Aristotle's writings which has led to so much confusion among contemporary theorists.³⁷ Speaking of poets, Aristotle states "Although their utterances were devoid of sense, they appeared to have gained their reputation through their style."³⁸ This Berggren called the "doctrine of ornament speaking."³⁹ Aristotle goes on:

The greatest thing by far is to have a command of the metaphor. It is the thing that cannot be learnt from others, it is also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive

³⁷ Douglas Charles Berggren, *An Analysis of Metaphorical Meaning and Truth*, Yale Univ. 1959 (Univ. Microfilms, 68-7442) p. 1.

³⁸ Aristotle, *The 'Art' of Rhetoric* iii. 1. 8..

³⁹ Berggren, p. 15.

perception of similarity in difference.⁴⁰

This Berggren terms the "doctrine of analogy."⁴¹

Aristotle's "ornament" view can be summarized as follows: A metaphor is one word put in place of a proper word (a proper word being any word used with its ordinary meaning - what most people mean by it or a word whose meaning does not distort the true essence of the thing.)

Aristotle says metaphor has no "cognitive sense,"⁴² but it can be used as an "ornament" to give language a "foreign air" to elevate diction for the purpose of evoking persuasion or pleasure. Finally, metaphorical usage ought to be appropriate to the context or subject matter, rather than "far fetched."

If metaphors have no "cognitive sense" they are useless so far as conveying information or attaining truth is concerned. What then is the purpose of the ornamental metaphor? Aristotle's definition seems to indicate that its function is to elevate style to make "ordinary discourse" more "ornate." Aristotle states at the beginning of his third book of his Rhetoric: "It is not sufficient to know what one ought to say, but one must also know how to say it, and this largely contributes to make the speech appear of a

⁴⁰Aristotle, Poetics 22. 1459a. 5.

⁴¹Berggren, p. 15.

⁴²Aristotle, Rhetoric iii. 1. 2-3.

certain character."⁴³ How a thing is said and what is said influence one another in a much more intimate fashion than Aristotle ever seemed to appreciate.

His second approach to metaphorical meaning, "the doctrine of analogy," begins with a discussion of simile versus metaphor. He states, "The simile is a metaphor for there is very little difference . . . (they) differ only in the manner stated."⁴⁴ We can assume then that for Aristotle there is no semantic loss in the switch from one to the other. Aristotle later adds:

The simile as we have said, is a metaphor differing only by addition of a word, wherefore it is less pleasant because it is longer; it does not say that this is that, the mind does not even examine this.⁴⁵

In this quotation Aristotle reveals the dichotomy in his views. The addition of one word he feels will affect the style of the passage. Yet Berggren feels that Aristotle praises the metaphor because "it engages the mind to examine what is said."⁴⁶ This is "the doctrine of analogy"⁴⁷ speaking.

⁴³Aristotle, Rhetoric iii. 1. 2-3.

⁴⁴Aristotle, Rhetoric iii. 4. 2-3.

⁴⁵Aristotle, Rhetoric iii. 10. 3-4

⁴⁶Berggren, p. 60.

⁴⁷Berggren, p. 15.

Aristotle believes that the metaphor can be divided into the following four parts based upon "transference."⁴⁸ A metaphor then can be a genus to species transference which we call a synecdoche. In this metaphor the whole is represented by one of its parts. For example, waves can represent the ocean.

Aristotle's second type involves a transference from species to genus. We call this type of metaphor where one thing is associated with another metonymy. Aristotle used the example "truly ten thousand good deeds has Ulysses wrought"⁴⁹ where "ten thousand" is put in place of the generic "a large number."

His third type of metaphor, a transference from species to species, can be accommodated within the confines of both synecdoche or metonymy. Aristotle uses the example of "severing the enduring bronze" and "drawing the life with bronze."⁵⁰ Both "severing" and "drawing" are interchangeable, since both mean "to take away."

Aristotle's final metaphorical type deals with analogy. Metaphors in this subclass are based on proportion. Aristotle writes:

Of the four kinds of metaphor the most popular

⁴⁸Aristotle, Poetics 21. 1457b.

⁴⁹Aristotle, Poetics 21. 1457b.

⁵⁰Aristotle, Poetics 21. 1457b

are those based on proportion. Thus, Pericles said that the youth that had perished during the war had disappeared from the state as if the year had lost its springtime.⁵¹

Aristotle's fourth metaphor type, the analogy, is possible whenever there are four terms so related that the second (B) is to the first (A) as the fourth (D) is to the third (C). The key word here is that they are related or that a relationship is present. This definition presupposes that metaphors are not single words, denoting discrete essences, but involve relations.

Those who follow in the steps of Aristotle glean inferences from his interpretation of metaphor. Berggren⁵² felt that Aristotle's theory of relationship in proportional metaphors was too limiting. For example, in studying Aristotle's metaphor "evening is the old age of the day", there is little trouble noting the relationship of "old age" and "evening." Old age follows youth as evening follows the day. However Homer's description of Apollo, "His coming was like the night" seems to be more than a mere relationship. "Night" is seen as an entity in its own right. We can feel the terror and danger often associated with the coming of night.

⁵¹Aristotle, *Rhetoric* iii, 10. 7.

⁵²Berggren, p. 85.

I.A. Richards is one of many theorists who accepted Aristotle's interpretation of metaphor. In one of his earlier works Richards states:

(Metaphor) is the supreme agent by which disparate and hitherto unconnected things are brought together in poetry for the sake of the effects upon attitude and impulse which spring from their collocation and from the combination which the mind then establishes between them.⁵³

Richards then reflects the view put forth by Aristotle. Richards sees our language as divided into the emotive and the referential. He states:

A statement may be used for the sake of the reference true or false, which it causes. . . .

But it may also be used for the sake of the effects in emotion and attitude produced by the reference it occasions.⁵⁴

It is clear then that Richards makes a distinction between the referential or "cognitive" aspect of a statement and the emotive aspect of which metaphor is the proponent.

⁵³I.A. Richards, Principles of Literary Criticism, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Limited, 1924) p. 240.

⁵⁴Richards, p. 267.

After the close examination of his students' interpretations of poems, however, he feels, "a mistake as to the general intention of a passage can obviously twist its sense for us, and its tone and feeling almost out of recognition."⁵⁵ He is aware of the tendency of his protocols to read into the poem things that are not there. The question then arises, if a student interprets by use of his feelings and emotions, why then are there so many interpretations of the same poem? Words, of course, are ambiguous and the context plays a strong role in the subsequent meaning. Richards then concedes that "a metaphor is a shift."⁵⁶ The metaphor is emotive "if the shift occurs through some similarity between the feelings the new situation and the normal situation arouse."⁵⁷ The sense metaphor is a result of a "shift of word meaning by a similarity or analogy between the object it is usually applied to and the new object."⁵⁸ Richards gives the example of using the word profound metaphorically:

When we use it we may be doing either of two things, or both together. We may be simply inviting from our reader the awed respectful feelings he usually has towards profound things. . . .

⁵⁵I. A. Richards, Practical Criticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc. 1929) p. 196.

⁵⁶Richards, Practical Criticism, p. 211.

⁵⁷Richards, p. 211.

⁵⁸Richards, p. 211.

This is the simplest type of emotive metaphor. Or we may be asking him to recognize that our feeling has in some (undefined) way something of the character of other profound things - that it is not easily explained for example. . . .

This is the sense metaphor.⁵⁹

Richards then expands and develops his theory of metaphor in light of the growing evidence that a statement contains more than any single paraphrase will reveal.

Later Richards rejects his "shifting and displacement of words"⁶⁰ in favor of a "transaction between contexts."

He states:

In the simplest formulation, when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word or phrase whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction.⁶¹

Richards now realizes that there is "an immense variety in these modes of interaction between co-present thoughts."

The many and varied interpretations of his protocols seem

⁵⁹Richards, p. 211.

⁶⁰I.A. Richards, The Philosophy of Rhetoric (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1936) p. 94.

⁶¹Richards, p. 93.

to result from the interaction or expression of knowledge resulting from the union of the two diverse aspects of the typical metaphor. The interactive theory now makes it possible to see the key words of a metaphor in a variety of ways. These multiple meanings are termed "associated commonplaces"⁶² by Max Black in his discussion of metaphors.

Like Richards, Black does not concern himself with the truth or falsity of a statement. For example, in the metaphor "man is a wolf"⁶³ he assumes that if we list all the "associated commonplaces" for wolf we would find many that were both true and false yet we would also find that the list contained only those statements common to the particular groups being evaluated.

Black then through the use of his "associated commonplaces" goes beyond Richards' idea of varied meanings and explains just how we arrive at an interpretation of a metaphor containing the "stock of common knowledge."⁶⁴ In the example "man is a wolf" many of the associations of wolf, for example, running - preying on the weak - are transferred to man during the interaction, with little attention paid to their validity. What about novel cases where the

⁶²Max Black, Models and Metaphors (New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 1962) p. 40.

⁶³Black, p. 39.

⁶⁴Black, p. 43.

reader has little background information concerning the metaphor? Black says it's a simple matter of setting up the reader by providing background information in the context. He states:

Metaphors can be supported by specially constructed systems of implications, as well as by accepted commonplaces; they can be made to measure and need not be reach-me-downs.⁶⁵

Both Black and Richards provide descriptions of metaphors that can be interpreted if enough information is presented either within or without a metaphorical statement. What happens, though, when we try to interpret metaphors in literature which have few clues? We must look at the semantics of the metaphorical statement. We have to ask such questions as: Is this statement logical? Is there a contradiction? What are the presuppositions? Is there an underlying meaning?

Leech terms metaphor a "counterlogical device" which is capable of "realigning our conceptual boundaries."⁶⁶ The views of Wheelwright reflect this same belief:

The semantic principle which is involved in metaphoric fusion . . . has as its subjective

⁶⁵Black, p. 43.

⁶⁶Geoffrey Leech, Semantics (Middlesex: Penguin Books Limited, 1974) p. 46.

condition a certain mental responsiveness -
 a "readiness to make connections and associate
 this with that. . . . Fresh associations can
 generate fresh meanings.⁶⁷

Wheelwright believes that the semantic function of poetry
 helps keep our "associative facility" in athletic trim.

The study of the semantics of a statement has resulted
 in the rejection of the earlier ideas of Aristotle and later
 Richards' idea that metaphor is a "grammatical maneuver" or
 "rhetorical stratagem."⁶⁸ In a sense the metaphorical
 statement has been laid clean - rather than accepting the
 existence of the metaphor and concentrating on its descrip-
 tion, we must look to its origins. As Wheelwright puts
 it: "The metaphoric extension of language presupposes that
 language of a sort already exists."⁶⁹ The mistake of the
 rhetoricians lies in their failure to go behind the simul-
 taneous presence of these two images in a metaphor, to the
 earlier stages of perception in which the two were seen as
 one. We must search for the answer to the question: Why
 is it that children have such a command of language? Buck
 feels we can trace back "the duality of the metaphor to a

⁶⁷ Philip Wheelwright, The Burning Fountain (Bloom-
 ington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1954) pp. 99-101.

⁶⁸ Wheelwright, p. 101.

⁶⁹ Wheelwright, p. 119.

primitive unity of consciousness."⁷⁰ Perhaps children borrow the name of some object or idea where their imagination finds some affinity, but Buck looks upon the development of metaphor as a result of the "poverty of language"⁷¹ particular to the child.

For example, a child upon seeing a fur muff worn by the mother might call it "a pussy cat." It is Buck's contention that the child perceives "a soft furry something"⁷² in both cases and has command of only one term, "pussy cat," which is then applied to all objects falling in this category. However, the typical adult can see the cognitive resemblance and wrongly assumes the child has made this same leap. Buck states:

The actual perception of resemblance is an activity comparatively late in its development. A vague feeling of the identity of two sensations or situations must repeatedly be experienced before it can be analyzed into the intellectual recognition of a resemblance or analogy.⁷³

⁷⁰ Gertrude Buck, The Metaphor (Michigan: The Inland Press, 1976) p. 33.

⁷¹ Buck, p. 12.

⁷² Buck, p. 13.

⁷³ Buck, p. 15.

When in the mind of the speaker the situation has complexed to the point where there are two distinct features present the language is said to be metaphorical.

Wheelwright calls the presence of two different situations "the associative law of emotional congruity."⁷⁴ He explains that a sound and a situation are coupled because at a given moment they strike the speaker as having the same emotional tone. "The mood passes but the wedlock has been joined."⁷⁵

There are then a wide range of theories accounting for metaphor, yet somehow these theories must be reflected in any attempt to provide students with instruction in metaphor. To the student must be passed the range of complexity from which the metaphor may arise. Then too, the student must realize his own potential to create and manipulate metaphors. Finally, teachers must come to grips with the problem of how students understand metaphors. The research of others into this perplexing question may remove the last obstacle to our development of a teaching unit on metaphor.

⁷⁴Philip Wheelwright, The Burning Fountain.

⁷⁵Wheelwright, p. 120.

Research In The Instruction Of Metaphor

Richards, in his book Interpretation in Teaching, states that the "unintelligibility of a problem may sometimes be due to lack of special experience."⁷⁶ The typical grade nine student may not demonstrate a great deal of experience when using metaphors, yet, the interpretation of metaphor involves more:

the language in which the problem comes to us . . .
or to our lack of experience with such language
or with the ways of language as such.⁷⁷

The problem of metaphoric interpretation, then, is closely connected with our ability to manipulate our language. Richards suggests that the problem be approached through an acquaintance with the special topic, and - which is more useful - a general readiness to expect words to change their senses according to their context. Just so, metaphor must be aligned with a study of meaning and how words change their meanings to suit the situation. This broadening mandate will carry us beyond the traditional definition of metaphor as "a comparison, not using like or as."

⁷⁶I.A. Richards, Interpretation In Teaching, (New York: Humanities Press Inc. 1973) p. 5.

⁷⁷Richards, p. 5.

The number of research papers specifically related to the instruction of metaphor at the junior high level is very limited.

Folta⁷⁸ looked closely at the mode of instruction as a variable in the teaching of metaphor. Although his research involved grade six students there are many implications pertinent to this discussion. Folta's study involved 272 students from Tippecanoe County, Indiana. Students were divided into four groups. In Group A, students were given a traditional unit of lectures on metaphor. (The teacher used only his/her own resources as a source of instruction.) Group B was given teacher instruction combined with various slides and films directly related to the topic. Folta called this "external support"⁷⁹ through given media and the teacher's verbal cueing. Group C was taught metaphor by a poet who provided "internal support."⁸⁰ The underlying assumptions here is that the teacher who is a poet brings to the class a unique background of experience for sharing with the students and helping in the cueing of metaphors. Finally the fourth group received no instruction. Folta argues that children in this age group have a tendency to

⁷⁸Bernard Paul Folta, Effects of Three Approaches to Teaching Poetry to Sixth Grade Students (Doctoral Thesis, Purdue Univ. 1979) p. 1.

⁷⁹Folta, p. 51.

⁸⁰Folta, p. 51.

attempt interpretation using concrete operations, so that by providing special forms of cueing he hopes students will use more sophisticated strategies to approach the meanings of metaphors.

Folta's results suggest a significant difference among treatments in the children's responses that dealt specifically with the interpretation of metaphoric language in poetry. Assuming that many teachers rely on texts to provide ample support material for instruction, the findings of Folta become even more significant. Earlier inspection of teacher resource material involved a large number of anthologies which failed to provide ample specific examples geared to classroom instruction. Folta believes that part of the success of Group B (teacher and media) and Group C (teacher poet) is based on the use of "more experiential types of activities."⁸¹ Teachers in "Treatment B" were given two films, twenty slides and sixteen transparencies to prime children to interpret images. The several poets in Treatment C "were caught up with the dynamics of interchange in discussing levels of meaning frequently shifting between the literal and the symbolic, constantly weaving webs of meaning based on experience."⁸²

Folta provides a list of suggestions of what a sequential development of metaphor instruction should contain.

⁸¹Folta, p. x.

⁸²Folta, p. x.

Get the children to identify key metaphoric events in the passage. For example, given "the mountain's rage,"⁸³ the teacher would guide the pupils to see points of similarity and difference between "acts of rage" by a person and "acts of rage" by a mountain. Secondly, try to find clues to the relationship between metaphoric events. Folta suggests the use of the poem "An Easy Decision" by Kenneth Patcher. The poem contrasts two families - one family consists of seven children running beside a horse upon which the parents ride; the second family consists of nineteen children and their parents who ride a big smiling hippopotamus. The author tells us it was an "easy decision" selecting one of the families to have supper with him.

Once students have been taught to search for these relationships their next task is to chain the various metaphoric events in a "generalization about the meaning of the poem."⁸⁴ In Gwendolyn Brooks' poem "Pete at the Zoo" the teacher must clue the reader to chain the elements which suggest the speaker's fear of being along.

Pete at the Zoo

I wonder if the elephant
Is lonely in his stall

⁸³Folta, p. 2.

⁸⁴Folta, p. 4.

When all the boys and girls are gone
 And there's no shout at all
 And there's no one to stomp before
 No one to note his might
 Does he hunch up as I do
 Against the dark of night?⁸⁵

As a final stage in the instruction of metaphor students should be tested and evaluated on their interpretation of a poem.

Not all teachers can create the kind of structure possible in the teacher-poet situation described by Folta. Nor can teachers be expected to construct from the many anthologies available to them the kind of program described as "external support." Nevertheless, many of Folta's ideas on the organization of metaphor instruction have merit in our schools. Too often there is a tendency for the teacher to preempt experience and to talk about what the poem "means" rather than to provide the experiences that show the children how the poetic elements operate to make the poem.

Ellen Winner⁸⁶ clearly documented ability of grade five students to produce and appreciate figurative language.

⁸⁵Folta, p. 5.

⁸⁶Ellen Winner, Can Pre-Adolescents Produce Metamorphic Figures? A Training Study, 1975 (Eric) Ed. 112407, p. 1.

The training group consisted of thirteen grade five students matched with a control group of eighteen grade five students. In a pre-test administered to both groups, students examined ten incomplete vignettes, whose completion required the addition of a simile. The completion task consisted of two parts: subjects created their own endings for each item, and then chose an ending from several which were presented to them. After the completion task, students from the training group were seen once a week for one-half hour for eight weeks, during which time explicit training in metaphor was given. The children were trained to make comparisons between sensory modalities and also between the psychological and physical domains. As the training group progressed, their ability to understand metaphors increased. Winner found that the stages through which subjects passed en route to metaphoric understanding were remarkably similar across groups.

Although this study involves students from the grade five level, the strategy for sequential development of metaphor understanding can be applied to any situation where metaphor is being introduced. Winner then suggests several stages the child passes through on his way to metaphoric understanding.

In discussing Winner's first stage, which she terms "children's untrained metaphoric output,"⁸⁷ I found it

⁸⁷Winner, p. 2.

necessary to refer to a second study⁸⁸ conducted by Winner in which she is again examining the development of metaphoric understanding.

Two tasks were used to assess children's capacities to interpret metaphoric statements. Subjects ranging in age from six to fourteen years were required either to explain a metaphoric sentence or to select one of four possible paraphrases.

Winner's third stage in this study is similar to her first stage in the study of grade five students. Winner then uses the metaphor "The prison guard was a rock."⁸⁹ She feels that children would find it easier to interpret this metaphor if both terms could be placed in the same realm.

If one focuses upon the guard solely as a physical object no comparison need be made between the physical and the psychological domain.⁹⁰

Students would take the metaphor as meaning that the guard was muscular like the rock.

The second stage she calls "the embellishment of the

⁸⁸Ellen Winner, The Development of Metaphoric Understanding Developmental Psychology, 1976, 12 (No. 4) p. 289.

⁸⁹Winner, p. 291.

⁹⁰Winner, p. 291.

conventional."⁹¹ This stage is characterized by students trying to add ornamentation. For example, "dark as night" might be restated "dark as a midnight without stars or moon." In the third stage, "the appeal of the inappropriate," students realized that a comparison between two different domains was called for and there was a tendency to produce inappropriate endings. For example, "The noise was as loud as a table."⁹²

In the fourth stage, Winner found that students were sometimes unable to perceive a similarity between two disparate domains of the incomplete vignettes. As a result students tried to include one domain inside the other. For example, "The sun was as warm as a mother's lap, because when she hugs you, you get warm because she rubs you."⁹³ Winner calls these "primitive attempts at cross categorization."

In stage five, "the incomplete metaphor," Winner found students could conceptualize a metaphoric connection but had trouble with its expression. For example, "hair as tangled as the friendship of a boy who just moved here,"⁹⁴ is opposed to "The boy could be tangled with his old and

⁹¹ Winner, Can Pre-Adolescents Produce Metaphoric Figures? A Training Study, p. 3.

⁹² Winner, p. 3.

⁹³ Winner, p. 3.

⁹⁴ Winner, p. 4.

new friends."

During the final week of training, students moved to the final stage of developing metaphors. (Winner was prompted by this study to construct the second experiment referred to earlier.) Because Winner's second study involves such a wide range of ages (six to fourteen), the difference discovered between the performance of the fourteen year old or grade nine students and the elementary students held implications for the instruction of metaphor at the junior high level.

In this second study one hundred and eighty students were divided by sex and then into six age levels, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12 and 14. Half of the subjects were given a metaphor explanation task in which they were required to supply metaphoric sentences. The other half were given an orally presented multiple-choice task in which each metaphoric sentence was followed by four possible interpretations: (1) "Magical," where the student directly predicts or assumes that one aspect of the metaphor is in fact the other. In Winner's example "The prison guard was a hard rock" students would interpret the guard as being made of stone.

(2) Where students attempted a juxtaposition, trying to replace one term with another, Winner called these types

of interpretations "metonymic."⁹⁵

(3) Winner's third possible interpretation found in the multiple-choice provided for the student is called "primitive metaphoric"⁹⁶ (the stage referred to in the discussion of Winner's first study). Students who confused both terms of a metaphor as belonging to the same domain would select this metaphor. For example, "Her perfume was bright sunshine" is a "cross-sensory"⁹⁷ metaphor. (The student dwelling upon color per se would fail to make the association between smell and color.) He would be interpreting in the one domain (color only). Once a student is able to recognize the two terms of a metaphor as belonging to separate domains, he is well on the way to interpreting "genuine metaphor" - the final stage.

Comparisons were then made based upon the age and sex of the child. Because the experimenter used students from a wide age range she was able to determine some general tendencies children show in developing an understanding of metaphor. Among her findings Winner states:

A higher level of metaphoric understanding emerged in early adolescence. Whereas the ten

⁹⁵Winner, The Development of Metaphoric Understanding, p. 291.

⁹⁶Winner, p. 291.

⁹⁷Winner, p. 291.

year old saw only one similarity between the two terms of the sentence, 14 year olds could characterize the metaphoric relationship in a variety of ways.⁹⁸

Winner then sums up her research by stating that spontaneous production of metaphors occurs first, followed by comprehension, and then by the ability to explain the rationale of the metaphor.

There is a definite similarity in the identification of key metaphoric events - the chaining and finally the generalization of these events - between Folta's study and Winner's suggestion that students become aware of their metaphoric efforts through comprehension before learning the rationale for their existence.

Winner also expressed concern about her inability to discover the actual strategies that led students to adopt their various responses. Perhaps the way the experiment was structured allowed little room for individual elaboration. For example, the second half of the group were required to choose between four possible interpretations; yet no personal accounting for one's choice was required. In her first study Winner also used a choice of four possible endings for the completion of the vignettes. Perhaps if the experimenter had increased the variety of possible

⁹⁸Winner, p. 296.

choices she might have forced the children to be more discriminating and then to demonstrate their strategy in selection.

Smith⁹⁹ is another researcher dealing with the question of how students understand metaphor. The primary purpose of his study was to investigate and compare the understanding that grade 6 and grade 8 children obtain from reading passages containing metaphor. Forty grade 6 and forty grade 8 children were presented with ten metaphors, each embedded in a sentence or a paragraph. Students were studied individually by the experimenter. Their verbal responses concerning the meaning of each metaphor were classified as belonging to one of the four following categories: "irrelevant responses," or responses which simply restate information from the passage; "translation responses" using material given in the passage in order to make inferences about the passage; "interpretive responses," which use material given in the passage in order to make inferences about the passage; and "elaborative responses," which elaborate and extend the meaning of the passages by suggesting descriptions, feelings or ideas about the passage. By using a relatively free and unstructured situation the author wished to go further than merely to measure "correct" and "incorrect" interpretations of metaphor. It was hoped

⁹⁹John William Alexander Smith, Children's Understanding of Written Metaphor (Master's Thesis, Univ. of Alberta 1973) p. 3.

that by relying mainly upon free verbalizations it would be possible to further examine how the reading of metaphors involves the selecting, eliminating, searching, and manipulation of activities.

After establishing rapport with the students the experimenter wished to avoid some of the stock "school" answers which children continually give and which they feel are expected of them. The student was asked to read the metaphor passage, first silently and then aloud. After the subject had read the passage the experimenter initially asked three questions:

1. What is this all about?
2. What does (here the metaphorical phrase was used) it mean?
3. Just imagine that I was a famous artist. What sort of picture would I paint about this scene?

Smith's next step was to use the Critical Reading and Apprediction Test because the author wished to discover whether those children who verbalized most fully and creatively in retrospective situations were able to achieve as well in a conventional paper and pencil test with a multiple choice format. Finally the "Associated Common Place Test" was devised by the author in order to examine the manner in which children assign meaning to metaphors.

The A.C.T. consisted simply of a list of fourteen possible associations for the subsidiary subject of each

metaphor chosen by the author on the basis of his interpretation of the meaning of the metaphor. These associations differed in their degree of appropriateness to the main subject of the metaphor. Some of the associations appear to be appropriate to both subsidiary and main subject of the metaphor while other associations are appropriate only to the subsidiary subject of the metaphor. For example, for the metaphor "the fog comes on little cat feet"¹⁰⁰ appropriate associations were "silent" and "graceful," while inappropriate associations were "jump" and "scratch" and unrelated words such as "thump" and "horn." There was no restriction on the number of words that the subject chose, but he was required to explain the reasons for his choice, and the scoring of the test was heavily based on "adequacy" of explanation.

The experimenter then compiled results from all three tests and concluded there was considerable agreement among the three measures of understanding. The Look at Literature scores, for instance, were found to be related positively to explanations and rationalization responses on the A.C.T. and negatively to lower level choices. The verbalization data were also related to the L.L.T. Subjects who scored well on the L.L.T. also made more translation responses, more appropriate interpretive responses and more appropriate

¹⁰⁰Smith, p. 61.

elaborative responses. He concludes "the ability to read for higher level critical meaning is related to the ability to explicate metaphor both on the test of metaphorical understanding and on free verbalization about metaphoric passages. . . ."¹⁰¹ It seems that subjects who chose more higher level associated commonplaces also tended to make more appropriate interpretative responses.

All metaphors used by Smith were submitted to a panel of judges who, with the aid of certain criteria, placed all metaphors in categories such as complex, unusual, denotative and connotative. It seems safe to say that metaphors which are common, simple or denotative lend themselves less readily to imaginative or unusual conceptualizations of their meanings.

The author found that although most of the children in this study might be expected from their age to be thinking at a formal operational level, they certainly did not show this in their interpretation of metaphor. In fact many of the low-scoring responses showed the characteristics of the earlier pre-operational and concrete operational stages. (When children are presented with new and difficult material they tend to return to earlier stages of cognitive functioning.) Many of the low scoring responses were egocentric, that is, the responses were lacking in flexibility

¹⁰¹ Smith, p. 120.

- the child could not detach himself from the most dominant and obvious associations of the parts of the metaphor. In contrast most of the high scoring protocols demonstrated thinking at a formal operational level. There was a flexibility in word meaning which allowed the child to select appropriate meanings from a wide variety of possibilities and combine them into a new cognitive scheme for the metaphor. The capacity of the children for going beyond the real to the potential was also apparent in their use of creative and subtle language to elaborate the meaning of the metaphor.

There are implications here for the organization and development of a sequential unit in metaphor, starting with simple examples of metaphor and progressing with a widening of experience and metaphor difficulty being made co-present.

From the verbal retrospection model, Smith concludes:

Some of the most important tasks in reading metaphor are the direct translation of the context, the making of inferences from the context and imaginative extensions from the context. The ability to select and explain appropriate Associated Commonplaces for the main and subsidiary subject of a metaphor is related to the ability to freely verbalize explanations of a

metaphorical passage in an interview situation."¹⁰²

Smith concludes that there was support in his study for the view that understanding written metaphor is a higher level cognitive skill which is an integral part of the reading process.

It can be concluded that grade six and grade eight children do differ from each other in the nature of the verbal retrospections. Grade eight children are better able to extract information from the passage (translation), more efficient at making inferences from the information they extract (interpretive) and more flexible in creating ideas about the passage (elaborative).

Redmond,¹⁰³ in her study on elementary children was interested in studying the active involvement of the child in the processing of images which underlies the understanding of metaphor.

An entire sixth grade class of forty-six students was involved in the study. Twenty-three students were randomly selected to form the experimental group. The control group consisted of another twenty-three students. While the experimental group were taught poetry the control group were taught grammar.

¹⁰²Smith, p. 184.

¹⁰³Sister Ann Redmond, *Children's Response to Metaphor in Poetry* (Doctoral Thesis, Univ. of Minnesota, 1978) Univ. Microfilm No. 7813447, p. 2.

This experimental study attempted to discover whether there are differences in responses to literature between students who have been taught poetry and those who have not been taught poetry. Before the evaluation period the experimental group were taught poetry twice a week for four weeks. Students were then tested with the Look at Literature Test. (This test was developed by the National Council of Teachers of English.) Because the poetry section used in this test requires students to understand metaphor, as a prelude to answering the questions, the items referring to poetry were appropriate for use in this study.

Redmond found little differences in responses: experimental group mean 9.17, control group mean 8.39. However a summation of the findings suggests that the teaching of poetry to sixth grade students does influence their ability to respond more in the translation mode (giving a literal interpretation or a summary of the poem's meaning). Redmond found few students able to respond in what she termed the "extension mode" (a type of response that involved the child's own personal experiences and projections). In fact these comments are frequent among researchers studying this age group. Students in the junior high experiencing difficulty with interpretation of metaphors tended to revert to this stage of their development (translation) and tried literal interpretations. Redmond found that subjects who studied poetry did not develop negative attitudes toward

poetry because of this study.

The findings of this study showed that children had difficulty in responding to any complete poem. An understanding of metaphor was essential to responding to the complete poem although a child might have been able to respond to some aspects of the poem without understanding all the metaphoric language used. Because an understanding of metaphor is necessary for an understanding of poetry, apparently it is important to teach students the purpose and form of various types of figurative language. An understanding of metaphor is dependent upon the verbal association within the child which requires the internal effort of calling forth images and associations.

Although the previous studies dealt with the problems students have in understanding metaphor, Mukherjee,¹⁰⁴ in her study, turns her attention to the gap existing between the many theories of metaphor and the teaching of metaphor. Within this excellent thesis then are findings, which applied to the instructional situation, can prove of benefit to the student's understanding of a most difficult subject.

Three modern interpretations of metaphor provide the nucleus for the investigation: the emotive theory as pre-

¹⁰⁴ Gaitri Hena Mukherjee, *Three Modern Interpretations of Metaphor With Implications For The Teaching of Literature in Secondary School* (Doctoral Thesis, Harvard Univ. 1977) Univ. Microfilms No. 788617, p. 1.

sented by I.A. Richards, the interaction theory as presented by I.A. Richards and Max Black, and finally the controversion theory as presented by Monroe Beardsley. The characteristic features of each of the three theoretical approaches were first described. Following this, the notion of meaning the theory was based upon was examined; next, the ways in which the theory could help readers recognize and interpret metaphors were studied; and last, a poem was analyzed using the guidelines the previous sections had yielded.

Many of Mukherjee's findings concerning the research of others into the theories of metaphor will be presented later. However, Mukherjee did test a group of students using emotive, interaction and finally controversion theories (and in the above order). Therefore the structure of her study and findings will be discussed here.

In "Approach One" the experimenter is testing the students' ability to use the emotive theory in the interpretation of a poem. The "emotivist" approach to reading a poem throws the onus for successful communication on the active participation of the reader. It is the reader who is to place strict controls upon his own reactions so that the communication of the original experience is facilitated. Mukherjee then introduces the students to W.B. Yeats poem "Lake Isle Innisfree." Upon completion of work on this poem students are asked to respond to "London" by William Blake. Students examined the effects the poem had on their

feelings and let these feelings guide their responses.

Mukherjee asked the students to state the overall theme in the poem "London." The experimenter later concluded it was a mistake to speak of "theme" in the early stages of metaphor interpretation because students tended to reorganize other aspects of the poem to conform to the requirements of the theme as identified.

Many of Mukherjee's findings relate closely to those found upon examination of students' responses to homework and final quizzes in both metaphor units used in the present study. Students then showed an inability to substantiate conclusions or opinions by referring to the poem. Students found it difficult to identify metaphors and those who did made no attempt to explain them.

In the experimenter's second approach, students were presented with guidelines and illustrations until they were able to grasp the main points of the interaction theory. The interactive theory makes it possible to think in terms of multiple meanings being attributed to the focal word, endowing it often with rich ambiguity which is seen not as an obstacle to understanding but as an added tool that facilitates our comprehension of language.

Again students were presented with several practice poems before they were again asked to interpret the poem "London." The author noted that many of his high school students made a marked attempt to identify metaphors com-

pared to their earlier responses but they mentioned difficulties with the multiplicity of meanings of words and phrases. Students' comments suggest a close examination of the text in cognitive terms demanded more of the students.

The third and final approach made by Mukherjee made use of the controversion theory as put forth by Monroe Beardsley. Beardsley sees metaphor as part of a species of discourse that says more than it states by cancelling out the primary meaning to make room for secondary meaning. A reader is led to look for this secondary or second level meaning by the writer's inclusion of built-in clues. These draw attention to the fact that the writer is not speaking on one level of meaning but calls attention to something else which he has not stated explicitly. Mukherjee found that once students had familiarized themselves with Beardsley's views they had little trouble understanding the poem "London." Of course, the idea of using the same poem for interpretation by the same students for three successive trials has its disadvantages. Is the marked improvement of interpretative ability the result of familiarization with the poem itself?

Every theory, then, may remind us that every poem has many more aspects than are presented on one occasion. Also, no single theory is best suited to the interpretation of a specific metaphor. Mukherjee feels that because poetic

language has no fixed framework, different modes of interpretation are called for. Consequently, the fundamental features of metaphor, its appearance, form and structure, in spite of their being an integral part of ordinary language, have to be taught systematically. The possibility of multiple interpretations should form one of the cornerstones of the teacher's strategy.

In summary the relationship between literary theory and classroom teaching is a complex one. To begin with, the teacher needs theory in order to conceptualize the field he teaches. Without such conceptualization he may well be unable to work out teaching-learning goals for himself and his students in order to guide them. He needs a considered grasp of key issues that will give him leverage over classroom activities; that is, whether they are appropriate for his teaching objectives.

Secondly, he needs an understanding of how best to approach a difficult and multi-faceted topic like metaphor in such a manner that his students will receive the best possible instructional units. The research of others into this most difficult task has helped to provide the proper direction.

Purpose.

The chapters to follow contain two metaphor teaching units which were taught to two separate, heterogeneously

grouped, grade nine academic classes. The two classes allowed the experimenter flexibility in the selection of approaches in metaphor instruction based upon the theories of others. Secondly, the sequence and relevancy of examples used in any unit for the teaching of metaphor is difficult, if not impossible to determine without a sufficiently broad base of experimentation. The information gleaned from the teaching of metaphor to students in these two classes will be used to develop a third unit for teaching metaphor. The experimenter wished to see if the style of teaching was a factor in how well students understood the concepts presented.

Both 9M and 9C lesson plan units were sequentially developed along two lines. First, students were gradually made aware of the broadness of definition of metaphor and its importance in their language. Secondly, metaphor was introduced as emotive. (Students were shown how their feelings were evoked by various authors.) Then through the use of metaphors with fewer contextual clues students were forced to use their powers of logic and experience to help them in understanding the metaphor. The examples used to produce the sequence varied between the two classes. In writing the third lesson plan unit, the experimenter used those examples from 9M and 9C which showed the greatest success.

Chapter III

Metaphor Lesson Plans for 9C Class

Introduction to Metaphor

One of the first things a grade nine student, or any student, should realize by now is that from the day you were born you have been collecting information. Your early experiences are used in organizing and understanding new experiences.

One of the tools used for broadening or increasing our knowledge is "metaphor." In fact, to demonstrate just how much we use metaphors I will tell you that there is a metaphor present in the first sentence of this paragraph. Metaphor is a tool. As students you may not know what a metaphor is but you are all familiar with the word "tool."

In the next few classes, then, you are going to become aware of metaphors and how you can use them in understanding new and unfamiliar information.

Lesson I

If I say to you: "My brother had a toothache in his toe," you know right away that there is something wrong with this sentence. Your experience tells you that whoever wrote the sentence has confused "toe" with the word "jaw." Perhaps the author doesn't know the meaning of "toe"

or the meaning of the word "jaw." In any case we all have rules of meaning stored in our heads and each time we see a sentence like this we know it doesn't make sense.

Now suppose I say, "Pilot of the air waves." Like the first example, you know the meaning of toothache and the meaning of toe. Let's make a list of all the meanings of the word "pilot" and next to them all the meanings of the words "air waves."

For example: Pilot pilot of a plane
 pilot of a space ship
 pilot of a waterway
 pilot light on a stove

Air Waves air gusts
 radio waves
 pulsating
 up and down motion
 waves of air created by
 plane's wings

Words then have more than one meaning and statements that appear absurd literally, may, in fact be metaphors. What we have here is a metaphor. Can you see any connection between "pilot" and "air waves?" "Pilot of the air waves" is a line taken from the song by Charlie Dore. Here is the remainder of the verse:

Pilot of the air waves

Here is my request, you don't have to play it

But I hope you'll do your best

I've been listening to your songs on the radio

And you seem like a friend to me.¹⁰⁵

Lesson II

Last day we were discussing Charlie Dore's metaphor "pilot of the air waves." Does the last line help you understand what "pilot of the air waves" means? The last line is what I call a "contextual clue," or a line in the context that helps explain an earlier language particle.

Can you see that this little twist of the words "pilot" and "air waves" gains our attention and just may help to sell records for Dore?

From what we have discussed so far then we should be able to put together a definition of metaphor.

Metaphor is a tool that helps us use old knowledge to understand the new. By means of metaphor we project the familiar onto the new and unfamiliar. For example, if you have never seen a Concorde supersonic jet liner, I could use a triangle to explain the basic shape. The triangle may trigger your memory and you may now understand the

¹⁰⁵Charlie Dore, "Pilot of the Air Waves" produced by Bruce Welch and Alan Tarney, 1979 Island Records Ltd. Manufactured and distributed by Wea Music of Canada Ltd. Scarborough, Ontario (49166).

aircraft I am discussing. What we take to be our knowledge is our stock of metaphors, and when we fail to understand something unfamiliar, it is because we have no metaphoric base from which to project an "as if" transformation. For example, I might try to explain the focusing of a camera using the way the eyes focus on an object, but if you are unfamiliar with the dilation of the pupil of the eye then the comparison is lost to you. Our understanding of "x" as if it were "y" is really a metaphor at work.

In the case of the metaphor "pilot of the air waves" we took part of the meaning of "pilot" and part of the meaning of "air waves" to form a new meaning for the old metaphor "disc jockey" or, if you prefer, the normal expression "radio announcer." This new meaning is now added to our storehouse of knowledge (another metaphor).

Through these three expressions you can also watch the development of language. When radio was first invented you can almost "see" the people of the time calling the man at the controls the radio announcer. Later as this term became worn or used a new term, "disc jockey," was added. Perhaps this was to match the role of the radio man whose songs were geared to the young and the young at heart. Finally, Dore's "pilot of the air waves" provides a new twist to an old metaphor and language grows as a result.

Lesson III

In the song "The Rose" by Bette Midler the author doesn't want to confuse the listener, so whenever a metaphor is mentioned she extends it so there should be no confusion as to what she means. Listen to the words; see if you can find the metaphor and also the meaning the author wishes you to grasp:

The Rose

Some say love, it is a river
That drowns the tender reed.

Some say love, it is the razor
That leaves your soul to bleed.

Some say love, it is a hunger
An endless aching need.

I say love, it is a flower and you its only seed.

It's the heart afraid of breaking
That never learns to dance

It's the dream afraid of walking
That never takes the chance.

It's the one that won't be taken
Who cannot seem to give

And the soul afraid of dying
That never learns to live.

When the night has been too lonely,
 And the road has been too long,
 And you think that love is only
 For the lucky and the strong.
 Just remember in the winter
 Far beneath that bitter snow
 Lies the seed that with the sun's love
 In the spring becomes a rose.¹⁰⁶

"The Rose" is an example of a proportional metaphor (what I mean by proportional is one plus two equals three plus four). For example, in line one of "The Rose," "love" plus "river" equals "drown" plus "reed." The metaphor affects our feelings and emotions. We can call the song an emotive extended metaphor (the term extended meaning simply that Midler is speaking of love throughout the song and through various metaphors she extends the idea throughout the song.)

In the following example from Shakespeare's Macbeth the metaphor is more complex: "Here lay Duncan. His silver skin laced with his golden blood."¹⁰⁷ This does not make sense, yet Duncan is a king and Shakespeare wants us to "see" that Duncan comes from royal stock and that his blood

¹⁰⁶Bette Midler, The Rose. Atlantic Record Corporation, Distributed by Wea Music of Canada, Scarborough, Ontario, 1979.

¹⁰⁷William Shakespeare. The Tragedy of Macbeth ed. by George Lyman Kittredge, Chicago, Spencer Press, Inc. 1958, p. 1125.

is "golden." In this metaphor the two elements "blood" and "golden" combine or react to give a meaning of more varied powers - this class of metaphor we call interactive. Two elements interact to produce new meaning. Like the expression, "My brother had a toothache in his toe," the words "golden blood" seem absurd. Yet it is this oddity or clash that is the clue that something is happening. Shakespeare in fact wants us to examine the breeding of a king and grasp the significance of killing such a person.

Assignment - Value 10% of Unit. Near the end of this metaphor unit I intend to give you a quiz to evaluate your knowledge of metaphor. To help you in preparing for this quiz I would like you to write a definition of metaphor. Use only material we have discussed in class. The grade you receive for this assignment will be considered in your final mark.

Lesson IV

For the first fifteen or twenty minutes of this class I want to give you an assignment to do at your desk.

Notice the following example, from T.S. Eliot's poem "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," "I have measured out my life in coffeespoons."¹⁰⁸ The two different elements are "life" and "coffeespoons."

¹⁰⁸ T.S. Eliot, Complete Poems (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966) p. 304.

Below is a list of possible interpretations you may use in explaining this metaphor. If you select one, I'll total all class responses to see which answer is most preferred.

- Statements:
1. "I have experienced life in small quantities."
 2. "Each day I have a cup of coffee and keep the spoon."
 3. "The man's life is compared to the small quantities coffee spoons can hold."
 4. "To break your whole lifetime into such small units is boring and useless."

If you selected statement two, you have missed the metaphor - it remains hidden to you. The other three statements are correct but of the three statements four is most accurate. Let us take a closer examination of these statements to see if we can find any reasons why number four is the best interpretation.

Statement one, "I have experienced life in small quantities"; here we have substituted a plain statement for a metaphor. We have tried to put in words what the author said in metaphor. Sometimes if you try this method you use a lot more words and the meaning of your paraphrase may not be the same as the metaphor.

Statement two, "Each day I have a cup of coffee and keep the spoon." This I would describe as a literal

interpretation. In other words the reader does not see a twist, in the meaning of life. The student tries to see life and coffeespoon in the same light. The metaphor is hidden to the reader who chose this statement.

Statement three is "The man's life is compared to the small quantities coffeespoons can hold." This is a comparison view and does not give all the meanings expressed by the original statement.

Statement four is "To break your whole lifetime into such small units is boring and useless." Here we look at the significance of the word "coffeespoon." Life is dull if a coffee spoon is used, we should grab life - cling to it, as opposed to the tedious labour involved in measuring it by coffeespoons. In summary then, remember that trying to interpret or explain a metaphor may involve more than a mere comparison or substitute for the metaphor. Like the example "golden blood," the author may have combined several elements to produce something new. (Example - life plus coffeespoon equals a dull life.) It is our job as readers and interpreters to find these new meanings. For many of us this discovery of meaning is part of the fun of reading. For others it is a necessary function to understand what is being read.

I have modified the first line of the poem "The Eagle" by Alfred Lord Tennyson: "He grabs the rock with twisted

hands." The words grabs, rock, and twisted are not Tennyson's assigned words but you will find them in the following lists:

<u>grabs</u>	<u>rock</u>	<u>twisted</u>
1. catches hold of	stone	rugged
2. reaches for	boulder	worn
3. holds firmly	cliff	mighty
4. grips	perch	vice like
5. clasps	crag	fixed
6. wrestles	mountain	rough
7. wears (away)	hill	crooked
8. worries	earth	powerful
9. kneads	soil	strong
10. clings to	turf	sharp

Your assignment for tonight is to select one word from each list to match grabs, rock, and twisted. Then I want a few sentences in which you justify your selection.

Lesson V

In Lesson III we looked at "The Rose" and noted the author's meaning was directed to our feelings or emotions. Today I'd like you to turn to page ninety-nine of the book Truth and Fantasy, the song "The Way I Feel" by Gordon Lightfoot.

The Way I Feel

The way I feel is like a robin
 Whose babes have flown to come no more,
 Like a tall oak tree, alone and crying
 When the birds have flown and the nest is bare.

Now a woman Lord, is like a young bird,
 And the tall oak tree is a young man's heart,
 Among its boughs you'll find her nesting,
 When the nights are cool, she is warm and dry.

Your coat of green it will protect her,
 Her wings will grow, your love will too,
 But all too soon your mighty branches
 Will cease to hold her,
 She'll fly from you.¹⁰⁹

Look at this poem carefully, study the metaphors individually and write down your interpretation of the line "your coat of green it will protect her." Next I want you to tell me (in a few words) what the poem means. You have twenty minutes before I collect the papers.

Hidden Metaphor:

Sometimes we fail to "see" a metaphor so it remains

¹⁰⁹ Kenneth J. Weber and Homer Hogan, Truth and Fantasy
 Toronto: Methuen Publications 1972, p. 99.

hidden to us. For example, Himey, in the television series "Get Smart" is a robot programmed to perform according to literal messages. For example: Man: "Himey, kill the light." (Himey takes out his pistol and shoots the light.) Can you think of any further example from "Get Smart" or any other show where there is confusion because someone has taken a metaphor literally? What poor Himey is doing is taking all the meaning of the word "kill" and transferring it to the object, "light." The man was only referring to "some" of the meaning of "kill" in reference to "light". The man wanted the light extinguished, turned off, or disconnected. If we ask Himey to rid us of the light using the last three examples: extinguish - he may have used an extinguisher, turned off - he may have turned the bulb, disconnect - he may have removed the bulb. In all three cases I have replaced one metaphor with another."

As was the case earlier when we discussed the "Concorde" and the "triangle" you may gather from this example that metaphors are very important as a way of extending our language and making it grow to suit new occasions. Without the ability to expand the meanings for a word our world would be as confined as that of a programmed robot. Himey's problem and our problem is: How do we recognize a metaphor when it is used? The first thing you have to realize is that you now have at your command a tremendous number of metaphors, for example, a head of lettuce, the wing of a

building, a heel (person), a crane (a bird and a machine).

For an assignment tonight think up ten "used" metaphors to be passed in tomorrow morning.

Lesson VI

Worn or used metaphors do not create a twist for us. Sitting on the stage telling a yarn does not create in the mind the image of your spinning - all we see is story-telling, but remember that to the person who doesn't know our culture the word yarn is a hidden metaphor - he hasn't made the connection yet between "yarn" and story.

These metaphors remain hidden to us - we could say we are over-familiar with them, but there are metaphors, especially in poetry, which seem hard to understand and do not have many clues in context to help us.

How many times have you heard a student say, "Sir, I haven't got a clue what the poet means." So, in this case too the metaphor remains hidden, although the student may be aware that there is one present.

I will give you two examples of metaphor. In the first the metaphor may be hidden because although you know it is there, you can not describe it. In the second you may not know the metaphor is present. Example one: Ezra Pound's "In a Station of the Metro."

The apparition of these faces in a crowd,

Petals on a wet, black bough.¹¹⁰

Example two: Herman Melville's "The Night March."

With banners furled, and clarions mute,
An army passes in the night,
And bearing spears and helms salute
The dark with bright.

In silence deep the legions stream,
With open ranks, in order true;
Over boundless plains they stream and gleam
No chief in view!

Afar in twinkling distance lost,
(So legends tell) he lonely wends
And back through all that shining host
His mandate sends.¹¹¹

Before I say anything about these poems I will remind you that the examples of "golden blood" and "life" and "coffee spoons" are similar to the examples of metaphor found here. Remember then to check the small number of clues present in the poems.

Without telling you the metaphor, I am going to help

¹¹⁰ X.J. Kennedy, An Introduction To Poetry, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company 1966) p. 76.

¹¹¹ Laurence Perrine, Four Forms of Metaphor, College English, 1971, 33 (No. 2) p. 135.

your understanding of the poem with the following comments:

"In a Station of the Metro" refers to a subway station.

"Apparition" is something appearing (a spirit).

Think about the information for a minute and put an interpretation of the poem in your own words on a piece of paper. Now let's look at the first line—the sudden appearance of faces (perhaps ghostly) in a large crowd. This is similar to the faces of students getting from the bus in the morning to go in school.

The second line is about petals of a flower on a wet, black bough. Perhaps like a wild rose petal that gets stuck to the stem of the plant during a heavy rain. Can you add anything further to your written interpretation? Perhaps it's a white rose. Does the color white do anything for you?

Though I have provided many contextual clues in order to help you interpret this poem, as of yet I have not given you the metaphor, which is the comparison of the white faces in the crowd to the white petal on the bough. Can you see the image now? Can you see the connection? This is an example of a comparison metaphor.

Example two - To discover the metaphor in this example the reader has to examine the whole poem. Try not to make any decisions about the whole poem until you examine its parts. Would someone like to tell us what this poem means? In your own words write what you feel the author is talking

about in this poem.

Could you explain why the words "beaming bright," "gleam," "twinkling" and "shining" are used in the night? What is the one thing you've all seen twinkle in the night? So the word stars has been omitted from the poem but the author placed such words as "no commander" and "open ranks" to discourage readers from thinking only of an army. It is our weakness as readers to discover what we consider to be the theme or main idea of a passage and then try to convince ourselves that we are right despite evidence to the contrary.

Lesson VII

If you look at the context in which you think a metaphor is present it may help expose the metaphor. Let's take the metaphor "any port in a storm"¹¹² and show how a different context can result in the different use of this metaphor. A woman is walking along the street and ducks into a tavern so her ex-husband won't see her. She exclaims "any port in a storm." Her meaning - it's better to hide in a tavern than face the storm of meeting her ex-husband. Here "any port in a storm" is definitely being used as a metaphor.

¹¹²Perrine, p. 129.

A respectable lady, seeking shelter from a heavy rain in a dump of a tavern would be speaking partially metaphorically and partially literally if she said "any port in a storm."

Finally, there is a vicious hurricane coming and a large passenger liner squeezes into a small sheltered harbour. The captain exclaims "Any port in a storm." No metaphor is used; his statement is for the purpose of clarity.

To summarize a bit then in this final lesson, let me again remind you that you can, as students, already use metaphor. The problem is becoming aware of its existence. A simple comparative metaphor like those found in Lightfoot or Midler poses no problem because students tend to interpret them using their own feelings or emotions. In metaphors where new meaning is created through the interaction of two separate elements it is necessary to study the meanings of the words and their effect as opposed to the reader's response in the understanding of the metaphor. We need a lot of obvious clues and plenty of practice in recognition. In metaphor then, two separate things interact to create a new meaning greater than the two separate things. For example, if I say, "You are a snake in the grass," I pretend that you are a snake in the grass and you must be aware of it. You may jokingly reply, "Smile when you say that." In other words, prove to me that you

aren't serious. I am pretending that you have the characteristics of a snake - low, crawling, bad, and revolting - but my meaning to you is greater than that stated. I intend for you to think that I am transferring to you some of the characteristics of the snake. We could describe the "intending" aspect of the message as an underlying or secondary meaning and the "pretend" aspect as the primary meaning.

Let's suppose we use an example. . . . You are the student "Joe" who while talking to "Mary" asks her to a movie and she agrees. You then ask her to pay the admission for you both. She replies "You are a snake in the grass." Now although she is pretending Joe is a low crawling snake, it is more important to her that Joe realize that she doesn't agree with her paying the admission for both.

Or this example - "If he wins, I'll eat my hat." The primary meaning is ridiculous yet the secondary meaning tells us the speaker feels someone hasn't much chance of winning.

Please remember that if a statement's meaning doesn't make sense to you look for clues in the text and in the meaning of the words within the statement. It may be metaphor and with the discovery of the metaphor comes new meaning for the reader.

Final Quiz - Metaphor 9C

At the completion of lesson three I asked you to put in your own words a definition of metaphor. Your mark for that test (10%) will be combined with your work on this final quiz, valued at 90%, and the final mark will be given to your Language Arts teacher as your final grade for the unit on metaphor.

"Mother to Son" - Langston Hughes.

Well son, I'll tell you:

Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.¹¹³

There is a metaphor present.

1(a) Using your own words describe the image you see. For example if the stairs are not crystal then what would you think they were like?

(b) Would you say the mother is from a rich or poor background? But more importantly I want to know the clue or clues present in these two lines that helped you decide from rich or poor background.

2(a) Explain in your own words what the metaphor means.

(b) Is the metaphor emotive - does it create strong feelings or emotions for us the reader? Or is the metaphor interactive - does it combine the existing elements to

¹¹³Jay Cline, Ken Williams and Dan Donlan, Voices (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1974) p. 263.

create something? If you say emotive then explain what the feelings you have are. If you say interactive explain what the new idea or object is that this metaphor has created.

To See A World

To see a world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour.¹¹⁴

William Blake

infinity - no boundaries of space or time
eternity - an endless amount of time

Although you can see from this brief poem that the words all have meaning for you - or simply that you understand the meaning of everything present, you may not understand why Blake made these combinations. For example, holding "infinity in the palm of your hand."

Remember it is part of the author's technique to juggle words in a statement creating apparent clashes of meaning in his use of metaphor. The fact that Blake has done this has triggered the presence of metaphor.

3(a) Write down what you consider are the metaphors. Tell

¹¹⁴ X.J. Kennedy, An Introduction to Poetry (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966) p. 90.

me why it is you think these are metaphors. (With reference to context and clues.)

(b) You know from the lesson we did earlier on "The Eagle" by Tennyson that a word has many meanings associated with it. What then are the common associations of the following?

world - grain of sand
 infinite - something that can be held in your hand
 eternity - hour

Some hints:

birth, death, infinity (life cycle), hour glass -
 sands of time.

4(a) In one of the lesson plans I told you that "The Rose" by Midler contained proportional metaphors. Is there a proportional metaphor in this example and if so can you explain it?

(b) In your own words tell me what you consider the poem is telling us.

Metaphor Lesson Plans for 9M Class

Lesson I

Did you know that a person writing a poem telling a story can use his/her words in such a way that we the readers are forced to think along the lines the author wants us to?

The harness that fits over the head of a horse often

contains blinkers or pieces of leather which prevent the horse from looking to the side. We could use this word to describe the way writers try to shape our opinions or feelings in their writing. Our own thinking can be "blinkered" by the kinds of writing an author uses.

How does the writer do it? He does it through a device called metaphor. Metaphor comes from the Greek word metaphora.

meta - meaning over

pherein - meaning to carry

Thus to "carry over" or "transfer." Metaphor then must involve a transfer of some sorts. Aspects of one object are carried over or transferred to another object.

Just think back to my earlier comment on "blinkered" and "thinking." I took the idea of blinkering a horse (so that he only sees forward and isn't distracted by what is going on about him) and I "transferred" it to the situation regarding the way we think or behave when the author uses metaphor in his writing.

If I say "you're blinkered in your thinking" you know I am transferring some of the meaning of the word "blinkered" to the word "think."

If I say "look, the poor horse hauling out the wood is blinkered," you know there isn't any metaphor present and my statement is literal (an exact interpretation of what is actually going on).

Sometimes though two thoughts of different things active together create a meaning which is the result of this interaction. This created meaning is new knowledge to some and "old hat" to others depending upon their experience.

Lesson II

In our case we may have heard the term "blinker horse" before experiencing it used to describe one's thinking, so we can say that this new metaphor has increased our knowledge. Not only has the term "blinker" been stretched in its number of meanings but we can now understand part of the process of using metaphor to control our thinking.

Metaphor sometimes says more than it states by cancelling out the primary meaning to make room for secondary meaning. Again, the writer provides clues enabling the reader to look for something other than what is conveyed by the literal statement. For example, compare the following statements: Mrs. Smith is prettier than Mrs. Jones, and Mrs. Jones is uglier than Mrs. Smith.¹¹⁵

The second statement is vicious; there is an underlying secondary meaning that the writer does not care too much for Mrs. Jones.

¹¹⁵Beardsley, p. 124.

As a second example I could tell you the story of one of our staff members who always enters the staff room in the morning with this greeting: "Good morning men, how are you?" "Hello, Joe." The teacher in question is placing Joe outside the circle of people he terms "men." In fact he is creating the underlying belief that Joe is something other than a man.

The first thing next class I am going to give you four questions concerning metaphor. All questions are brief and can be answered using your notes. Tonight study your notes. The quiz is valued at ten percent of your final mark.

In the time remaining in this class I'd like you to write five metaphors you have heard in your daily conversation. As examples here are five I have heard:

Joe is cool.

Mary is a dragon.

Bill is a pig.

Linda came crawling back to Nelson.

Time just slipped away.

When you have finished raise your hand and I'll check them out.

Lesson III

This quiz is to be done during the first twenty minutes of this class.

Questions:

1. What do I mean when I say metaphor involves a transfer of meaning?
2. Metaphor often involves new knowledge through interaction or secondary meaning. Explain.
3. When I used "blinker" I stretched its meaning. Was I creating new knowledge? Explain.
4. Study this metaphor: "If he wins I'll eat my hat."
What is the author really saying to us?

Awareness of Metaphor

Aside from the facts that metaphor involves a transference of meaning from one object to another or that metaphor is the interaction of two ideas or thoughts to form a new idea or that metaphor is hidden or underlying meaning, I must further explain that you now have at your command a lot of metaphors.

In a typical exchange between you and me the conversation might go something like this:

"Well, what do you think of Metaphor?"

"Well, sir, I think it's the pits!"

"Pits" is being used by you in a metaphoric sense. The pit of a fruit is usually very bitter so any experience you have in life that is unpleasant can be described in terms of "pits." Instead of fruit pits some of you may associate

the term with gravel pits which too can be unpleasant.

My question though is do you think of fruit "pits" whenever you use the expression "It's the pits" or do you use the expression because you've heard someone else use it? Finally, have you made the connection months or years ago between the expression and fruit pits and how whenever you hear the expression it means only unpleasant aspects?

In fact my questioning is designed to show the level of awareness you may have in relation to this particular metaphor. The original comparison between "something" and "fruit pits" has been forgotten and the idea of unpleasantness is now associated with this metaphor.

Lesson IV

The big factor then in developing or increasing our knowledge of the world around us depends on our awareness of metaphor and our ability to recognize when one is being used. Generally the more experience we have the larger is our stock of metaphors and the easier it is to relate the familiar to the new and unfamiliar.

When it comes to words and their meanings we all may lack the ability to place all the right meanings next to every word. In fact in many cases new words are being created and new meanings are being added to old words at a rate too fast for us to keep pace.

Suppose I say "Richard is a lion." Now if I ask you

to list all the qualities associated with lions you would, as individuals, list characteristics or qualities that are common for students in our society. However, if a teacher in Africa asked his students to list the qualities of a lion we might find in the comparison that your ideas differ considerably from the ideas of students who are familiar with lions.

Let's make a list of things we associate with lions:

Lions are meat eaters.

Lions are members of the cat family.

The female lion does most of the hunting.

Lions are vicious.

Lions are mean.

Lions are powerful.

Lions are swift.

It would not be unusual for your list to contain things that are both true and false, yet many of the things you believe about lions others in the class will also believe.

Now in stating that "Richard is a lion," you are transferring to "Richard" some of the qualities you associate with "lions." Richard may be loyal, powerful, or brave. To the person hearing or reading the statement he now "sees" Richard with new knowledge or meaning. Now it is not just Richard but a brave and loyal man.

Any human traits that can, without undue strain, be talked about in "lion language" will be rendered prominent,

and any that cannot will be pushed into the background. In fact instead of saying we are being "blinker" by the writer, I could say in understanding a metaphor we filter out the kind of associations we feel fit the metaphor we are reading.

As an assignment for tonight tell me the associations prominent in this metaphor: "He is a wolf."

Lesson V

During this period you are going to do some seat work which will be passed in at the end of the period.

Here are six metaphors. For each metaphor I want you to list ten associations. From these ten I'd like you to select those you consider appropriate. For example; "Her teeth were pearls."

Pearls are shining.

Pearls are expensive.

Pearls are found in oysters.

Pearls are usually white (some are black).

Pearls are uniform in being round.

Pearls are clean or clean looking.

Pearls are rare (hard to find).

Pearls are durable.

Pearls are worn as jewelry.

Pearls look great.

Here are your metaphors:

1. Heaven is a flower.
2. A young man is a tall oak tree.
3. A young woman is a bird.
4. Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
5. Feathers for feet.
6. He is a snake in the grass.

Sometimes to discover the meaning of a metaphor you need to stand back and read the metaphor in relation to the context in which you find it. Sometimes the context provides clues to the appropriate meaning. Look at this example by Dylan Thomas, look carefully at the metaphor "bandaged town."

A Child's Christmas in Wales

And they rang their tidings over the bandaged town, over the bandaged town, over the frozen foam of the powder and ice cream hills, over the crackling sea. It seemed that all the churches boomed for joy under my window and the weather-cocks crowed for Christmas on our fence.¹¹⁶

Instead of first listing all the associated commonplace meanings for "bandaged town" I want you to think

¹¹⁶Smith, p. 214.

them all through but in the light of the context of the paragraph and see if your meaning of "bandaged town" fits the remainder of the paragraph. As a hint "bandaged" means more than merely white like the snow. Think about the other characteristics associated with bandaged.

Lesson VI

So far we have spent considerable time on finding out what is meant by metaphor and being able to use our experience plus clues present in the context to help explain the meaning.

Today I want to try making our own metaphors. For example, if you were to describe some of the difference between the kind of language you use and that of your parents, you would find that metaphors would account for some of the difference.

I want you to select two of the following situations and create your own metaphors:

(A) Suppose you're a radio announcer and you are describing a hockey game. (I can remember one particular announcer who used to say "he let go with a cannonading shot.")

See if you can create an image of a good body check or an exceptional save by a goalie. Remember you are a radio announcer trying to create a certain image in the mind of the listener.

(B) The French teacher is asking students to read paragraphs

from a French passage and you did not do that translation and your turn is next. In metaphor try to describe your feelings to a friend.

(C) Your friend goes to the stadium canteen and this guy/girl you've been dying to meet comes up and sits next to you. Again, you are trying to explain your feelings to a friend.

If you prefer you may create your own situation. For example, let's imagine we are listening in on the following conversation between Jack Tripper and a friend at the Regal Beagle. Jack: "Hello, Marsha, how fortunate to run into you." (Run into is a worn or dead metaphor).

Marsha: "Macho man has arrived." (Macho man is a relatively new metaphor). Here "macho" is using the underlying meaning that Jack thinks he is a macho man.

Jack: "Not true Marsha, I'm just a quiet, loveable, lonely man." (Jack implies he is a lost puppy without any home.)

Marsha: "Face it Jack, you're a wolf in sheep's clothing." (An old metaphor meaning Jack is not what he seems.)

Final Quiz - Metaphor 9M

In lesson three I gave you a small quiz of four questions. Your mark for that quiz, ten per cent, will be added with your mark on this final quiz valued at ninety per cent and this mark will be given to your Language Arts teacher as your final grade for the unit on metaphor.

Look at this poem by Stephen Tropp:

My Wife Is My Shirt

My wife is my shirt

I put my hands through her armpits

Slide my head through her mouth

And finally button her blood around my hands.¹¹⁷

1(a) First, what is the metaphor in this poem?

(b) Would you say the metaphor is developed through a transfer of meaning or through the interaction of two aspects of the metaphor or are we to look beyond a primary meaning to something secondary?

Remember it is not sufficient to say yes, it is this kind of metaphor, you must use your own sentences and references to the poem to back up your answer - if not then I'll assume you're guessing.

(c) Would you think that a person who knew nothing about metaphor would be upset with this poem? Why?

2(a) "I never promised you a rose garden." What does it mean? You may list the associations of rose gardens in an effort to find out what the person may be looking for.

(b) "I'm searching for a friend in a large apartment building and I knock on this door. Nobody answers so I enter. In the corner I find a small bedside table and on it is a

¹¹⁷Kennedy, p. 103.

wash basin full of ice. I shiver and exclaim, "This room is cold."

I go down the hall a few doors and knock on another door. A stern looking butler opens the door a crack and in a snubbish drawl asks "Yes?" I explain my problem and he lets me enter. The room is very warm and several people are playing chess, all are dressed formally and the chess pieces and table are made of glass. I say hello and nobody looks or speaks. The butler returns with a note on a platter which reads, "I cannot help you, please go." I exclaim as I leave, "This room is cold."

Which paragraph is using "cold" metaphorically? Back up your statement with clues from the text of the paragraph.

Chapter IV

Evaluation of Lesson Plans

Many of the ideas used in the exercises in these lesson plans came from research. During the discussion of these ideas and their origin the investigator will attempt to evaluate their effectiveness in the instruction of grade nine students. This can be accomplished by referring to the assignments and test material passed in by students during the treatment of certain concepts. In this way one can decide which exercises merit retention for a third unit of lesson plans and which are to be discarded.

Instruction of metaphor was conducted in two grade nine classes using two different units of lesson plans. All students were told that the unit on metaphor would be included in their final English mark.

Each class was given a small quiz valued at ten per cent of their metaphor work and upon completion of the unit each class was given a quiz valued at ninety per cent.

Grade 9M class was taught metaphor in a traditional style using dictation for the majority of theory. Seat work was assigned at points where new concepts were to be practiced. Grade nine C students were introduced to songs and poems geared to their age group. More opportunity was provided for discussion as opposed to seat work.

Evaluation of Nine C Metaphor Unit

In lesson one the investigator used the phrase "we all have rules of meaning stored in our heads." Beardsley uses the term "logical absurdity"¹¹⁸ to denote statements which show incompatible meanings. Thomas uses a "contradiction matrix" to show that certain statements do not mix.

. . . certain words which are logically and linguistically incompatible with one or more functions of a second word are nonetheless transferred, in a particular context to a second word.¹¹⁹

Perhaps Leech, in his comments on the power to realign conceptual boundaries, sums up our desire to make sense out of statements:

It seems to be an incontrovertible principle of semantics that the human mind abhors a vacuum of sense so a speaker of English faced with absurd sentences will strain his interpretative

¹¹⁸ Monroe C. Beardsley, Aesthetics Problems In the Philosophy of Criticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1958) p. 138.

¹¹⁹ Owen Thomas, Metaphor and Related Subjects (New York: Random House 1969) p. 27.

faculty to the utmost to read them meaningfully.¹²⁰

Metaphor then has the power to realign conceptual boundaries and students must learn to recognize these realignments.

When I introduced the metaphor "Pilot of the Air Waves" the majority of students already knew its meaning. I found this surprising because the literal term is omitted from the metaphor. Although the literal term is revealed later in context, this still remains a fairly sophisticated metaphor for this age group. I had showed the development of language through changes first in this metaphor, starting from radio announcer, through disc jockey and finally "pilot of the air waves." In discussion I felt students had gained confidence in their own ability to recognize contemporary metaphors.

The definition of metaphor found in lesson two is developed from comments by Tyler. He sees metaphor as "the instrument that accommodates new knowledge to old."¹²¹ The purpose in using his ideas is to show the student that metaphor is fundamental and unavoidable in language development. From this basis in definition, I tried to develop examples of various types of metaphor students might come

¹²⁰ Geoffrey Leech, Semantics Aylesbury: Hazell, Watson and Viney Limited, 1974, p. 8.

¹²¹ Stephen A. Tyler, The Said and The Unsaid.

in contact with.

The song "The Rose" by Bette Midler proved a good example of extended emotive metaphor. Its strength as an example lay not in its release of feelings but in the way the author used proportional metaphors to extend her theme. Mukherjee¹²² in her thesis, "Three Modern Interpretations of Metaphor With Implications for the Teaching of Literature in Secondary Schools," classifies 'emotive' as one of the three theories. Students introduced to emotive theory seemed to be sensitive to the tone of poems but missed the central theme by a considerable margin. They tended to dwell on what they imagined the poet was feeling, without substantiating their remarks.

In their final evaluation students were presented the metaphor "Life for me ain't been no crystal stair," and although they could interpret the metaphor as either emotive or interactive, many chose to associate with the hard life the person had (the emotive aspect). Later when students were introduced to "The Night March" by Herman Melville they tended to accept the idea that the poem was about an army, even in the face of mounting evidence during discussion to the contrary. Beardsley makes the point that

¹²²Gaitri Hena Mukherjee, *The Modern Interpretations of Metaphor With Implications for the Teaching of Literature in Secondary Schools* (Doctoral Thesis, Harvard Univ. 1977), Univ. microfilm No. 78-8617) p. 99.

emotive words have meaning only if "there is some way of confirming its applicability."¹²³ For example, the combination "sharp tongue" is not meaningful because we have no measure of the "sharpness." For Beardsley then emotive metaphors are outside the sphere of cognition.

I tried to make the distinction between an emotive and an interactive metaphor by using the metaphor "golden blood" from Shakespeare's play Macbeth. Mukherjee construes the interaction view of metaphor as a "complex cognitive model of verbal expression."¹²⁴ Richards, in Philosophy of Rhetoric, disagrees with Dr. Johnson's ideas that metaphor gives you two ideas for one. Richards says there is "immense variety"¹²⁵ in these modes of interaction; in fact, the sum of the parts is not greater than the whole. Richards goes on to explain that the Elizabethans could distinguish "with great skill modes of interaction." (This is not a skill demonstrated by grade nine students in this situation.) Having explained "golden blood," students could see beyond emotive. In the final evaluation students were presented with the poem "To See a World" by William Blake:

To see a world in a grain of sand

¹²³Beardsley, p. 135.

¹²⁴Mukherjee, p. 25.

¹²⁵Richards, p. 93.

And a heaven in a wild flower.

Students could not reconcile the terms presented, for example:

The world is made of sand.

(The grain is associated to many planets in and out of the solar system.)

The second line:

Heaven and flowers are associated with each other. (Heaven is supposed to be like paradise; a flower is just a small part of Heaven.)

The student is close on both interpretations but it seems the explanation of interaction has not yet been grasped. He sees common associations, yet he cannot express their common ground. I tried to rectify the problem in my third metaphor unit by leaving the introduction of interaction until I had discussed secondary or underlying meaning. Also, I used an example from Shakespeare "Love's not time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks within his bending sickle's compass come." I had hoped the brief additional contextual clues would help the student "see" the interaction - time means nothing to love. Love will last forever.

In the metaphor "I have measured out my life in coffee-spoons" taken from the poem "The Love Song of J. Alfred

Purfrook" by T.S. Eliot, I found I tried to demonstrate too many things with but one example.

Smith¹²⁶ designed an Associated Common Place Test based on Black's theory in which he examined the manner in which children assign meaning to metaphors. He did this by providing a list of words and phrases which resembled the original metaphor. He then asked students to select those words or phrases which were more closely associated with the original metaphor. By providing four variations of the original metaphor "I have measured out my life in coffee spoons," I could ask students to select the more accurate association. Upon evaluating I found students had indeed selected the most accurate metaphor, but they failed to justify their selection in the majority of cases.

Using the same example, I wanted to show some of the limitations of the substitution and comparison views. I tried to accomplish this by providing four interpretations of the metaphor: literal, comparative, substitution, and finally one interactive. Black states that in using a substitution you believe "there is some literal expression of equal merit"¹²⁷ and of course without too much reflection

¹²⁶John William Alexander Smith, Children's Understanding of Written Metaphor (Master's Thesis, Univ. of Alberta, 1973) p. 60.

¹²⁷Black, p. 31.

we can come up with a metaphor which is very difficult to improve. If we seek an underlying similarity with which we can compare the metaphor, Black says we are using a comparison view. This too is considered a special case of substitution. Although Black demonstrates the limitations of these two views in his development of interaction as an explanation of metaphor, he does suggest that these terms can be used for "trivial cases."¹²⁸ It is my contention that examples like Bette Midler's song "The Rose" are trivial cases and that students do not look beyond the emotive (or effect upon their feelings). Students can "see" a comparison and this is sufficient. Examples like "The Rose," I used as a starting point for students but my object was to present the whole spectrum of metaphor through awareness. Richards, in his early Principles of Literary Criticism, was more concerned with the effects of metaphor rather than with its nature. He bases his notions on a theory of meaning where language functions and meanings are dichotomized into the referential and the emotive.

Metaphor is conceived as an emotive non-symbolic feature of language which acts as a stimulus that causes emotions and attitudes in the respondent and has consequently very little to do with

¹²⁸Black, p. 45.

intellectual operations.¹²⁹

Although students selected the interactive interpretation of Eliot's metaphor, they still explained the meaning of Langston Hughes' metaphor in terms of the emotive:

Well son I'll tell you

Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

For example, one student wrote:

I would say the metaphor is emotive. I feel pity for the mother because she had to go through life not having a lot of money . . . probably she feels sorry that she can't give him what she always wanted.

Richards' theory has it that the individual's subjective, emotive responses provide a more important guide for interpreting the poem than does the text of the poem itself.

Some students took the metaphor as being interactive:

The metaphor is interactive because the two ideas of 'life' and 'crystal stair' combine to make the one of the rich life, which is smooth and easy going.

¹²⁹I.A. Richards, Principles of Literary Criticism, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1924, p. 240.

It seems then that many students in this 9C class failed to go beyond emotive when assessing metaphors. I found the metaphor "I have measured out my life in coffee spoons" was cumbersome and ineffective. Each statement takes a great deal of time to explain. To use this approach effectively, I would allow more time in the lesson plan to work on other examples. Examples would be divided into a "trivial" category and an "interactive" category. In this way students could see that a substitution/comparison view works best with emotive metaphors, while interactive metaphors rely on the cognitive.

In lesson four I used Tennyson's "The Eagle," "He clasps the crag with crooked hands." In much the same manner as Smith¹³⁰ had used his Associated Common Place Test, I modified the original line from Tennyson's poem to read "He grabs the rock with twisted hands." By providing lists of associations for the original words I allowed students to select appropriate associations. I found this exercise very successful, for students seemed to select at least one and in some cases two of the exact words from the thirty associations listed. In cases where the exact word was not chosen I found students used a more appropriate rather than a less appropriate word. For example: "He clasps the earth with mighty hands," or "He grips the cliff with talon

¹³⁰Smith, p. 60.

hands." or "He holds firmly the crag with crooked hands." Inappropriate words like "kneads" or "wrestles" instead of "grips," "boulder" or "perch" instead of "rock," "vice-like" or "mighty" instead of "twisted" were not common among the answers supplied by the students. In comparison to the treatment of Eliot's metaphor, I found this exercise more effective.

The song, "The Way I Feel" by Gordon Lightfoot represents an attempt to introduce more difficult metaphors. Although both this poem (or song) and Bette Midler's are examples of extended metaphor with plenty of contextual clues, Lightfoot's theme (that men are inflexible and women are flighty) is implied while Midler's song is explicit in stating what love is.

Students had little trouble understanding the metaphor "your coat of green it will protect her." However, in stating what the song meant students again showed a reluctance to go beyond the images of the bird - woman, tree - man comparisons to look at the relationship of man and woman as expressed by Lightfoot. It is interesting to note here that I asked students in the other class (9M) to list associations for these two metaphors: "A tall oak tree is a young man's heart." and "A woman Lord is like a young bird." I found included in their associations such words as "inflexible," "looks proud," "have a lot of growing to do" for young man and oak tree, while young woman and bird

were associated this way, "gentle," "fragile," "innocent," "free," "fear some humans." From the evidence I can assume that students already make the right associations but are still having problems expressing the synthesis in each metaphor.

Using the example of Himey from the television series "Get Smart" to illustrate hidden metaphor seemed to provoke enthusiastic discussion. Students also made reference to other television programs making use of metaphors. For example, Fonzie on "Happy Days" has a stock of metaphors like "cool" and "nerds." Buck Rogers, in the television series, "Buck Rogers in the Twenty-Fifth Century" speaks in metaphor much to the dismay of Colonel Deering, whose objective computer-like language is suited to the society of twenty-fifth century Earth. The discussion of hidden metaphor was designed to help students become aware of the hazards involved in interpreting metaphors literally.

Lesson six involves the gradual exposure of a metaphor through the presentation of contextual clues. My purpose here was to demonstrate that seemingly difficult metaphors can be explained in the development of clues throughout the passage. The first example was Ezra Pound's poem "In A Station of The Metro":

The apparition of these faces in the crowd,
Petals on a wet, black bough.

Wheelwright¹³¹ describes this as a good example of diaphor (the production of new meaning by juxtaposition). Two contrasting images are presented in this metaphor. My contention is that if students cannot see the similarity of these two images it is because they lack the experience and/or because existing clues have not impressed themselves upon the students' minds. Perhaps as teachers we can stimulate this cognition through a gradual development of clues. Like Wheelwright, I agree that the "juxtaposition is tinged, faintly and subtly with a suggested comparison." By having the students change from the image of a subway station to one of students disembarking from a school bus on a grey winter morning, I hoped to give students a relevant experience from their environment with which to associate the line "apparition of these faces in a crowd." Finally, I asked them to think of the petal as being white. With white as the common color, students quickly recognized the similarity between the two lines.

For a second example I used Herman Melville's poem "The Night March." Black would call this poem a "riddle":

an attempt to construct an entire sentence of words that are used metaphorically.¹³²

¹³¹Philip Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1962) p. 80.

¹³²Black, p. 27.

Perrine classifies Melville's poem as an "extended form three metaphor"¹³³ (only the figurative term is named, the literal term must be inferred). During discussion then I asked "What was the army doing marching without a commander?" "Why were the banners furled?" Finally I asked "What twinkles in the night?" Again the students were quick to grasp the meaning of this poem through the development of clues.

In the proverbial "any port in a storm"¹³⁴ the context was varied so the student could see the effect on meaning. At times confusion arises as a result of using metaphors which do not have a literal term. The figurative term is often taken literally, as the example of "army" taking the place of "stars" in the "night march."

Using Beardsley's metaphor "If he wins I'll eat my hat,"¹³⁵ and my own interpretation of "you are a snake in the grass," I tried to summarize some of the points made about metaphor in this unit. Because reference to aspects of the final quiz were discussed during the evaluation of this unit, let us move on to the discussion of the 9M class.

¹³³Perrine, p. 135.

¹³⁴Perrine, p. 129.

¹³⁵Beardsley, p. 138.

Evaluation of the Nine M Metaphor Unit

In the teacher's handbook for Learning Language, the authors are discussing how we are trapped in metaphor:

It is also true that our thinking can be blink-
ered by the metaphors we accept and use. A
metaphor can illuminate because it works by
analogy; but it can also limit one's thinking
to that one "image."¹³⁶

I am using their ideas in the development of the first half of this lesson plan. Unfortunately the authors felt these ideas should not be presented in a student text. They felt that "metaphor needed a fuller development than was feasible here, and probably belongs in a later grade."¹³⁷ During the first half of lesson one students were evaluated on how well they understood metaphor as a transfer of meaning. Students were also asked how words like "blink-ered" were stretched to show their association with other meanings. The results of this evaluation together with the frequent reference students made to this explanation of metaphor transfer clearly demonstrated that students under-

¹³⁶P.G. Penner and R.E. McConnell, Learning Language, Teacher's Handbook (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1977) p. 44.

¹³⁷Penner, p. 38.

stood the interpretation of metaphor presented to them.

Hawkes says metaphor

refers to a particular linguistic process whereby aspects of one object are "carried" over or transferred to another object, so that the second object is spoken of "as if" it were the first.¹³⁸

Buck¹³⁹ would describe this as a "descriptive definition" of metaphor, but there is more to metaphor than a mere transfer of meaning between objects. The intent here is to show in a sequential manner the complexity of metaphor.

Richards, in The Philosophy of Rhetoric refers to Aristotle's definition of metaphor as the idea of having "a good eye for resemblance."¹⁴⁰ Later Richards develops his opinions of metaphor. If you look closer at metaphor, "there is an immense variety in those modes of interaction between co-present thoughts."¹⁴¹ By using the style of developing my lesson plans and by introducing metaphor through example, I hope to keep pace with a changing defin-

¹³⁸ Terrence Hawkes, Metaphor (London: Methuen and Company Limited, 1972) p. 1.

¹³⁹ Gertrude Buck, The Metaphor, A Study in the Psychology of Rhetoric (Michigan: The Inland Press, 1976) p. 1.

¹⁴⁰ Richards, The Philosophy of Rhetoric, p. 86.

¹⁴¹ Richards, p. 93.

ition of metaphor, thereby widening the students' knowledge of what metaphor is.

In lesson two I moved from the discussion of metaphor as "transfer of meaning" to metaphor as "underlying meaning." Beardsley, who is the proponent of this theory, says that:

What a sentence suggests, then is what we can infer that the speaker probably believes beyond what it states.¹⁴²

The statement: "Mrs. Jones is uglier than Mrs. Smith."¹⁴³ is a presupposition. It presupposes that Mrs. Jones is ugly. The second example presented in this lesson plan is also a presupposition. However, the example I used in the students' final evaluation is a contradiction: "If he wins I'll eat my hat." Both Beardsley and Leech¹⁴⁴ believe that the presence of metaphor can be triggered through clues in the logical arrangement of meaning in a sentence. Leech terms our ability to recognize these underlying meanings "our semantic alertness." Mukherjee states:

When some feature of an utterance denies normal expectations of a word's meaning, this is a good

¹⁴²Beardsley, p. 123.

¹⁴³Beardsley, p. 124.

¹⁴⁴Leech, p. 46.

indication that metaphor is present.¹⁴⁵

In the second half of lesson three I used the metaphor "It's the pits," in discussing "awareness and metaphor." The majority of students were familiar with this expression and most felt that upon hearing this expression they associated the metaphor with feelings of unpleasantness. Few students thought of gravel pits or fruit pits when they heard this expression.

While discussing "Richard is a lion" in lesson four, I tried to demonstrate a point made in Black's text, Models and Metaphors that we all have meanings we associate with words and each group has associations which may be true or false but are common to that group.

In any given culture the responses made by different persons to the text suggested would agree rather closely . . . but the important thing for the metaphor's effectiveness is not that the commonplaces shall be true, but that they should be readily and freely evoked.¹⁴⁶

As an assignment I asked students to list the associations for the metaphor "he is a wolf" and upon reviewing

¹⁴⁵ Mukherjee, p. 61.

¹⁴⁶ Black, p. 40.

this material I was not surprised to find many half truths concerning wolves.

In lesson five I again dealt with the approach of associated commonplaces used by Black. I used the metaphor "her teeth were pearls" and using the word pearls listed some of its associations. During the remainder of the period I asked students to find the associations in six other examples. I was pleased with the efforts of the students. They clearly demonstrated their ability to list appropriate associations.

The metaphor "bandaged town"¹⁴⁷ was borrowed from Smith's thesis. This passage by Dylan Thomas was one of a number of examples which Smith used in evaluating children's verbal responses to metaphor. Although students found it easy to relate or associate "bandaged" with "snow" they failed to go beyond the primary meaning to the underlying idea of "bandage" as a comfortable, secure protection in much the same way that snow serves to insulate the town. Smith found that "there were negligible numbers of interpretations relying on experience for any of these metaphors."¹⁴⁸ Yet this is a problem experienced in my attempts to instruct students in the understanding of metaphor. Like Mukherjee, I believe that in some cases students let their feelings

¹⁴⁷Smith, p. 214.

¹⁴⁸Smith, p. 197.

be their guide and fail to see the most obvious clues.

Yet at times I believe that students regress and revert to earlier skills in their attempts at interpretation.

Smith's study seems to reflect the same problem. "When children are presented with new and difficult material they tend to return to earlier stages of cognitive functioning."¹⁴⁹ The solution to the student's tendency to

misread or to regress seems to lie in how the student approaches the context and the clues presented there.

Although Smith used three different instruments to measure student's responses to metaphors, he found that all three relied heavily upon three skills needed by the student in his/her efforts at interpretation. The skills were:

The manner in which children utilize and infer from contextual information, select from an array of meanings, and imaginatively elaborate the possibilities which are present in the actual metaphorical passage.¹⁵⁰

I hope that my final lesson plan will succeed in providing students an opportunity to practice these important skills.

Lesson six proved to be one of the most interesting classes. Having provided the students with an example of

¹⁴⁹Smith, p. 178.

¹⁵⁰Smith, p. 190.

creating one's own metaphor, I found students were enthusiastic in selecting a structure and then developing their own metaphor.

Chapter V

Suggested Lesson Plan for Metaphor Grade Nine Metaphor Teaching Unit

One of the first things a grade nine student, or any student should realize is that from the day you were born you have been collecting information. Your early experiences are used in organizing and understanding the unfamiliar.

One of the tools used for broadening or increasing our knowledge is metaphor. In fact to demonstrate just how much we use metaphors I will tell you that there is a metaphor present in the first sentence of this paragraph. Metaphor is a tool. As students you may not know what a metaphor is but you all are familiar with the word "tool."

In the next few classes then you are going to become familiar with metaphor and how it is used.

Lesson I

Did you know that a person writing a poem or telling a story can use his/her words in such a way that we, the readers, are forced to think along the lines the author wants us to?

The harness that fits over the head of a horse often contains blinkers or pieces of leather which prevent the horse from looking to the side. We could use this word to

describe the way writers try to shape our opinions or feelings in their writing; our own thinking can be "blinkerered" by the kinds of writing an author uses.

But how does a writer do it? He does it through a device called metaphor. Metaphor comes from the Greek word metaphora - meta meaning "over"; pherein meaning "to carry." Thus: to "carry over" or "transfer." Metaphor then must involve a transfer of some sorts. Aspects of one object are carried over or transferred to another object. Just think back to my earlier comment on "blinkerered" and "thinking." I took the idea of blinkerering a horse so that he only sees forward and isn't distracted by what is going on about him and I "transferred" it to the situation regarding the way we think or behave when the author uses metaphor in his writing.

If I say "you're blinkerered in your thinking," you know I am transferring some of the meaning of the word "blinkerered" to the word "think."

However, if I say "that horse hauling wood is blinkerered," you know there isn't any metaphor present and my statement is literal (an exact interpretation of what is actually going on).

In our case we have heard the term "blinkerered horse" before, yet we had never experienced it used to describe one's thinking. So we can say that this new metaphor has increased our knowledge. Not only has the term "blinkerered"

been stretched in its number of meanings but we now understand part of the process of using metaphor to control our thinking.

Lesson II

This "stretching effect" can also be applied to both terms of the metaphor. We stretched "blinker" to suit "thinking" and in this example "Pilot of the Air Waves" from the song by Charlie Dore both terms must be stretched to understand the similarity between the two. To stretch this metaphor we have to look at the associated meanings for the words "air waves" and "pilot." Let's make a list of all the meanings of the word "pilot" and next to them all the meanings of the words "air waves." For example:

pilot	air waves
pilot of a ship	pulsating air
pilot of a spaceship	like rings of water
pilot of a waterway	radio waves
pilot light on a stove	gusts of wind
controls, directs	

From one list you select those associations you think are compatible or work well with those in the other group. For example; a pilot controls or directs; air waves could mean radio waves. So our "pilot of the air waves" is really a radio announcer.

Not everyone can discover a precise meaning of a

metaphor, so authors often provide clues in the context (or remainder of the story or poem) to help us grasp the meaning. For example, in the song "Pilot of the Air Waves":

Pilot of the air waves.
 Here's my request, you don't have to play it
 But I hope you'll do your best
 I've been listening to your songs on the radio
 And you seem like a friend to me.¹⁵¹

There's no mistaking the clue "I've been listening to your songs on the radio." Seemingly difficult lines in a poem are often solved by merely reading on and evaluating the clues left by the author. The last line is a contextual clue that helps explain an earlier language particle. Can you see that this little twist of the words "pilot" and "air waves" gains our attention. Our first reaction - why has the writer put two seemingly opposite things together? This puzzling question is the first clue that metaphor is present.

Lesson III

Before moving ahead with new material I'd like you to

¹⁵¹ Charlie Dore, "Pilot of The Air Waves" produced by Bruce Welch and Alan Tarney, 1979, Island Records Ltd. Manufactured and distributed by Wea Music of Canada Ltd. Scarborough, Ontario (49166)..

take a few minutes to answer this question. Please put your name and class on the papers which will be passed in and corrected.

Question 1. What do I mean when I say metaphor involves a transfer of meaning?

Question 2. When I used "blinker" I stretched its meaning. Was I creating new knowledge? Explain.

Awareness of Metaphor

Everyone in class has a good command of metaphor. The problem is that few of us are aware of the metaphor we are using or when others around us are using them. For example, in a typical exchange I might say to you "Well what do you think of metaphor?" "Well sir, It's the pits." "Pits" is being used by you in a metaphoric sense. The pit of a fruit is usually very bitter so any experience you have in life that is unpleasant can be described in terms of "pits." Instead of fruit pits some of you may associate this term with gravel pits (which too can be unpleasant).

My question is do you think of fruit pits whenever you use the expression "It's the pits," or do you use the expression because you've heard someone else use it? Finally, have you made the connection and upon hearing the expression associate it with feelings of unpleasantness?

In fact my questioning is designed to show the level of awareness you may have in relation to this particular metaphor. If we overused the metaphor "It's the pits" then the meaning of the metaphor will remain hidden to us. For us the metaphor does not have a twist. Sitting on the stage telling a yarn does not create in the mind the image of yarn spinning - all we see is a story. But remember, to the person who doesn't know our culture, the word "yarn" is a metaphor - they haven't made the connection yet between yarn and story.

In the television series "Get Smart," Himey is a robot programmed to perform according to literal messages. For example, Max: "Himey, kill the light." Himey takes out his pistol and shoots the light. Can you think of any further examples from "Get Smart" or any other show where there is confusion because someone has taken a metaphor literally? What poor Himey is doing is taking (all the meaning of) the word "kill" and transferring it to the object. Max was only referring to "some" of the meaning of kill in reference to the light.

Lesson IV

Max wanted the light extinguished, turned off or disconnected. If he had asked Himey to rid him of the light using the last three examples: extinguish - he may have used an extinguisher; turned off - he may have turned the

bulb; disconnect - he may have removed the bulb. In all three cases I have replaced one metaphor with another. Metaphors then are very important as a way of extending our language and making it grow to suit new occasions. Without the ability to recognize and be aware of metaphor we would become as limited as Himey.

I hope the following definition can help in your ability to recognize the presence of metaphor. Early in lesson one you noticed that metaphor could be a transfer of meaning between two things that don't necessarily appear to have any common characteristics, like "blinkers" and "thinking." Metaphor then extends our knowledge by projecting the familiar unto the new and unfamiliar. For example, if you have never seen a Concorde supersonic jet liner, I could use a triangle to explain the basic shape. The triangle may trigger your memory and you may now understand which aircraft I am discussing. What we take to be our knowledge is our stock of metaphors, and when we fail to understand something unfamiliar, it is because we have no metaphoric base from which to project an "as if" transformation. For example, I might try to explain the focusing of a camera using the way the eye focuses on an object. But if you are unfamiliar with the dilation of the eye's pupil then the comparison is lost to you. Our understanding of "x as if it were y" is really metaphor at work.

"Pilot of the air waves" is another type of metaphor I'll call "interactive." Part of the meaning of "pilot" and part of the meaning of "air waves" form a new meaning for the old metaphor "disc jockey" or, if you prefer, the normal expression "radio announcer." This new meaning is now added to our storehouse of knowledge (another metaphor).

Lesson V

We all have "rules of meaning" which prevent us from coming up with sentence combinations like "I have a toothache in my toe." We know the meaning of "toothache" and of course it is not related to our "toe." We know right away that this sentence doesn't make sense. Writers are aware of this ability we have to try to "make sense" of all statements we come in contact with.

For example, "If he wins, I'll eat my hat," you know immediately that "eating" and "hat" do not go together. So you must look beyond this primary meaning and see if the author has an underlying message. The message is "I don't believe he has a chance of winning."

As a second example I could tell you the story of one of our staff members who always enters the staff room with this greeting, "Good morning, men, how are you? Hello Joe." The teacher is placing "Joe" outside the circle of people he terms "men." In fact he is creating the underlying belief that "Joe" is something other than a man.

Assignment: During the time remaining in this period answer the following questions:

1. Metaphors often involve new knowledge through interaction or secondary meaning, explain.
2. "It never rains, it pours." What is the author really saying to us?
3. Can you see any difference in the following statements:
 - (i) Mrs. Smith is prettier than Mrs. Jones.
 - (ii) Mrs. Jones is uglier than Mrs. Smith. If there is a difference, what is it?

Lesson VI

In the following example from Shakespeare's Macbeth is the line "Here lay Duncan, his silver skin laced with his golden blood." The words "golden blood" seem to be mismatched and the meaning is not immediately clear. From what we have discussed so far you know that if this statement is to make sense there must be an underlying meaning. In the play, Macbeth is a loyal subject of King Duncan. While visiting Macbeth's castle, the king is murdered by Lady Macbeth. Since Duncan comes from royal stock his blood is actually "golden." Shakespeare's purpose then in making this unusual combination of "golden" and "blood" is to demonstrate the vastness or enormity of the crime committed. It is not just the death of a "person"

but the death of a "king."

Like the expression "My brother had a toothache in his toe," the words "golden blood" seem absurd, yet it is this oddity or clash that is the clue that something is happening. In the following exercise I have modified the first line of the poem "The Eagle" by Alfred Lord Tennyson.

"He grabs the rock with twisted hand." The words "grabs," "rock" and "twisted" are not Tennyson's original words but you will find them in the following lists:

<u>grabs</u>	<u>rock</u>	<u>twisted</u>
1. catches hold of	stone	rugged
2. reaches for	boulder	worn
3. holds firmly	cliff	mighty
4. grips	perch	vice like
5. clasps	crag	fixed
6. wrestles	mountain	rough
7. wears (away)	hill	crooked
8. worries	earth	powerful
9. kneads	soil	strong
10. clings to	turf	sharp

For the next few minutes I want you to study the associations in the list and select what you feel is the best or most appropriate association for each word. Your work is to be passed in at the end of the period.

As homework I would like you to look at the following metaphors, by each metaphor I would like you to list ten

associations. From these ten I'd like you to select those you consider appropriate. For example:

"Her teeth were pearls."

pearls are shiny ✓

pearls are expensive

pearls are found in oysters

pearls are usually white (some black) ✓

pearls are smooth and round ✓

pearls are clear and clean looking ✓

pearls are durable ✓

pearls are rare

pearls are worn as jewelry

pearls look great ✓

By these associations of pearls that are appropriate to be placed with teeth, I have used a check mark.

(a) Heaven is a flower

(b) A young man is a tall oak tree.

(c) A young woman is a bird

(d) He is a snake in the grass.

Lesson VII

As I said earlier, poetry and other examples of literature often provide contextual clues to the meaning of a metaphor. You saw in Charlie Dore's song that she was referring to a radio announcer. But I also explained

in the "blinker" and "thinking" example that a statement may be using metaphor or it may be literal depending upon the context. As students it is very important, then, to recognize when metaphor is being used. As an example of the kind of variation in meaning a metaphor can take as a result of changes in context, study the following example "any port in a storm." A woman is walking along the street and ducks into a tavern so her ex-husband won't see her. She exclaims "any port in a storm." Her meaning - it's better to hide in a tavern than face the storm of meeting her ex-husband. Here "any port in a storm" is definitely being used as a metaphor.

A respectable lady, seeking shelter from a heavy rain in a dump of a tavern would be speaking partially metaphorically and partially literally if she says "any port in a storm."

Finally there is a vicious hurricane coming and a large passenger liner squeezes into a small sheltered harbour. The captain exclaims "any port in a storm." No metaphor is used, his statement is for the purpose of clarity.

Sometimes the contextual clues provided by an author are few and the responsibility for discovering the metaphor is left to the student. Ezra Pound's poem "In A Station of the Metro" is very brief with few clues to help the reader.

The apparition of these faces in a crowd, petals
on a wet, black bough.¹⁵²

If you take things a step at a time you may be able to reveal the metaphor. Apparition is a ghost or appearance of a spirit. Because we usually associate white with ghosts, then the faces in the crowd are white.

"In A Station of the Metro" could refer to a bus, train, or subway station. Because we are familiar with bus stations or particular school buses we should try to construct an image involving crowds of people getting off a bus or buses.

The second aspect of this poem concerns "petals on a wet, black bough." The background then is black. Now if we use the color white we have the common association between the two parts of the poem. The white faces of the crowd are like the white petals on the bough.

Lesson VIII

During this final class in the unit on metaphor you are going to construct your own metaphors. I will provide some situations in which you may develop your metaphor or if you prefer you can construct the situation and resulting metaphors yourself. For example, I have chosen a situation

¹⁵²Kennedy, p. 76.

from the television series, "Three's Company" where Jack Tripper is trying to "pick up" Marsha at the Regal Beagle:
 Jack: "Hello, Marsha, how fortunate to run into you," ("run into you" is a "used" metaphor).

Marsha: "Aha, Macho man has arrived." (Macho man is new metaphor used here as sarcasm).

Jack: "Not true now Marsha, I'm just a quiet, lovable, lonely man." Here the literal figure puppy has been omitted and the associations we have concerning a puppy have been introduced to suggest that Jack is just a lonely puppy.

Marsha: "Face it, Jack, you are a wolf in sheep's clothing."
 Marsha, seeing through the disguise compares Jack to a wolf.

((The following then are some suggested situations you may use in developing your metaphors:

(a) Suppose you're a radio announcer and you are describing a hockey game (I can remember one particular announcer who used to say "he let go with a cannonading shot"). See if you can create an image of a good body check or an exceptional save by a goalie. Remember you are a radio announcer trying to create a certain image in the mind of the listener.

(b) Your girlfriend goes to the stadium canteen and this guy you've been dying to meet comes up and sits next to you. Again, you are trying to explain your feelings to a friend. Those students who feel at the end of the period

that they need more time may take home their assignment and pass it in the next day.

Evaluation

Look at the following short poem by Stephen Tropp:

My Wife is My Shirt

My wife is my shirt

I put my hands through her armpits

Slide my hands through her mouth

And finally button her blood around my hands.¹⁵³

(a) Everyone knows your wife can't be your shirt so what does it mean?

(b) Would you say the metaphor is developed through a transfer of meaning or through the interaction of the two aspects of the metaphor or are we to look beyond a primary meaning to something secondary? Remember it is not sufficient to say yes, it is this kind of metaphor. You must use your own sentences and refer to the poem to back up your answer.

(c) Would you think anyone who knew nothing about metaphor would be upset with this poem? Why?

Section II

The following two lines are from a poem by William

¹⁵³Kennedy, p. 103.

Shakespeare:

Love's not time's fool, though rosy lips and
cheeks

Within his bending sickle's compass come.¹⁵⁴

2. (a) What does the author mean when he says "Love's not time's fool?"

(b) What are the associations for rosy lips and cheeks which the author wants us to "see?"

(c) "His bending sickle's compass come" is a metaphor. Explain its meaning.

(d) What is the complete meaning of the two lines?

Summary

I tried to incorporate the idea that students at this level of maturity should rely less on their emotive processes of interpretation and look carefully at the clues presented in the context. I hoped, in an indirect manner, to show that the study of metaphor in poetry challenges the cognitive processes of the student. Because of the lack of clues present in poetry, the student is forced to seek more imaginative solutions, thereby increasing their knowledge and experience. I tried to establish a sequential development of the wide spectrum of metaphor and what it

¹⁵⁴Kennedy, p. 341.

entails yet keep the examples simple and relevant. Thus, I hoped to help the student realize that although metaphor has many faces or disguises it is always present even in the simplest and most innocent communications.

I remain convinced that a good unit of lessons in metaphor can be gleaned from the texts for grades seven, eight and nine. Yet I am equally convinced that without delving into the theory of metaphor and the steps leading to its understanding, the teacher will lack the confidence to mould this information for the advancement of his students.

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